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NEW HAMPSHIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TO THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

A BRIEFING ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
DEVELOPMENTS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nashua Senior High School  
Nashua, New Hampshire 03060  
Thursday, May 6, 1999

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U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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## PARTICIPANTS:

## NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

David H. Bradley

Carmen Buford

Sylvia F. Chaplain

Anthony J. Epaphras

Robert R. Fournier

Marie Metoyer

Reverend Bertha A. Perkins

Andrew T. Stewart

Patricia A. Taylor

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. TAYLOR: Good morning and welcome. My name is Patricia Taylor. I'm a business person in my private life and in the present capacity acting as the Chairperson of the New Hampshire Advisory Committee, the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Joining me today is our Committee, and we'll begin with going to my left, Mr. Fernando Serpa. Introduce yourself, please.

MR. SERPA: I'm Fernando Serpa with the United States Commission on Civil Rights in Washington, D.C. I serve as the liaison to the New Hampshire Committee, and I'm always happy to be here.

DR. METOYER: I'm Dr. Marie Metoyer. I'm a retired psychiatrist from Manchester Mental Health. I'm representing the New Hampshire NAACP and the Manchester Cultural Diversity Task Force.

MR. STEWART: I'm Andrew Stewart. I'm a retired lawyer and current musician. I've been on this Advisory Committee for 20 years, and it's a pleasure to be here in Nashua.

DR. FOURNIER: I'm Bob Fournier. I'm retired from education 32 plus years, and I've been with the Commission, with the Advisory Committee to the Commission for the past 18 years.

MR. EPAPHRAS: My time is Tony Epaphras. I teach in New Hampshire College, and also I work for Southern New Hampshire Services. I am also a member and co-chair of this Advisory Counsel on The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Welcome.

MS. CHAPLAIN: I'm Sylvia Chaplain, and I've been on this Advisory Committee for most of the last 35 years. I take the prize.

DR. BUFORD: I'm Carmen Buford, retired faculty member and Associate Dean for the University of New Hampshire, and I've been on the Committee since about 1992 or so.

MR. BRADLEY: I'm Dave Bradley. I'm a practicing lawyer in Hanover, New Hampshire. I aspire to be a musician, but I'm not about to retire. I think I've been on about that length. I don't know. Whenever Andy recruited me. He knows.

MS. TAYLOR: And may I start again with this statement? If there's anything that you do not understand, if we're not talking clear enough here, please let us know. I want you to hear everything we're saying. I'll try to speak up. The United States Commission on Civil Rights was created under the Civil Rights Act of 1957 as an independent, bipartisan fact-finding agency whose mission is to

project and promote the civil rights efforts afforded all of us under the Constitution and Acts of Congress. The New Hampshire Advisory Committee is one of 51 committees created to advise the commission on matters relating to discrimination or denials of equal protection of the laws based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or administration of justice. Today's briefing is one in which we seek to inquire in to equal education opportunities and police-community relations in the Nashua Metropolitan area. The focus of today's briefing meeting will be to collect data and information to determine if a more in-depth inquiry into these issues is warranted based on this briefing. This briefing will be divided into two sections as follows: The morning session will be equal education opportunities in public schools, and the afternoon session will be police-community relations. With respect to these two sessions, we are asking for specific things of each person that has given the letter indicating the kind of things that we're wanting to hear about. We would also appreciate any of the participants to provide any background material, data, surveys or anything that would help us to better understand the situations. This meeting will run from 9:30 to 4:30 p.m., and we are very

pleased, obviously, to have knowledgeable people coming to talk to us about this matter. This briefing is designed to provide an opportunity for all concerned to identify problems and express concerns and for public officials to respond. We hope to spread the word to other New Hampshire communities that civil rights problems deserve serious attention and remedial efforts by state officials and the public. By holding the projected series of community briefings and later issuing our reports, the committee hopes to contribute valuable information to the public for uses in their advocacy efforts to improve the lives of the people in New Hampshire. Each speaker is going to be asked to give about a 5-to 10-minute presentation. If you have a prepared statement, please give it to Mr. Fernando Serpa, our staff person here, and it will be considered a part of this inquiry. Those of you who are accustomed to speaking without a statement, please help us by keeping your presentation and comments sharply focused. We also ask you to abide by our legal obligations to refrain from defaming or degrading any individual whether present or not. The briefing is being transcribed. As you see, we have a court reporter. To ensure that we are actually getting these statements correctly

attributed to the person speaking, we ask that when you start to speak and start to give your presentation that you introduce yourselves so that we are sure that the commentary is attributed to the correct person. Let me emphasize that as the eyes and ears of the Commission in the New Hampshire area, our first duty is to listen in an impartial manner. If we fail to understand a statement, we ask for clarifications; therefore, when we pose questions, please do not feel that you're being cross-examined. We're just simply trying to get the facts. After this meeting has adjourned, we may need to ask for further clarifications on information provided to us, so we look forward to your cooperation should this prove to be necessary. Also, our records will remain open for 30 days to receive comments from any person who wishes to contribute to our better understanding of the issues, and at this point we'd like to give it to the hands of the principal, Principal Cote, to give us a welcome. Thank you. Principal Cote.

MR. COTE: Good morning. I think I can do it without the microphone. We're very very happy to have you here today, and I would have to attribute a lot of this work that's been done to one of my assistant principals, Deborah Migneault, who has



helped coordinate today's program, and Deb is over here. If you'd stand up for a minute? She has been instrumental in working this program through. Not only having you people here today, but we also in Nashua now have developed our own committee of community members who are concerned about civil rights of all of the people within the school and in the community and how we work as a community because Nashua High School has 2,600 students. We're a small city in itself, and we have a diverse population within our school, and we hope that at all times that we can have all of our students here working together towards improving and completing their education. So we know that we have to all work together to have a good, harmonious community here at Nashua High, and we hope that we can do that. So you people here today are just an extension of what we try and do here at Nashua High as well, and we're very happy to have you and hope that our accommodations here today meet your needs, and I'm sure your luncheon will assure you some of the finer arts that our students can accomplish here at Nashua High. Thank you very much for choosing us as a place to have your meeting today. Thank you.

MS. TAYLOR: Now we turn it over to Fernando Serpa.

MR. SERPA: Welcome. I'd like to welcome everyone on behalf of the National Commission on Civil Rights and I'm very excited. I think we're going to hear a lot of good information that will be useful for this community and for the state and on the national level. The first panel today is going to be on equal education opportunities, and our moderator is going to be Robert Fournier.

DR. FOURNIER: Good morning. Just a few items before we start. Attorney David Bradley is keeping time. Each panel member will have approximately 10 minutes. There is an electronic beep that you'll hear at the end of your time so that you can, you know, wind it up when you hear the beep. Each person will have 10 minutes. If two of you come up, that means that you will have 20 minutes and so on. So before any further ado, why don't we start the Panel One, students, parents and community awareness and call on Sister Nancy Braceland of The Hispanic Network.

SISTER BRACELAND: My name is Sister Nancy Braceland. I have been working with the Hispanics in Nashua for 14 years and have been coordinator of The Hispanic Network for 13 years. The Hispanic Network is a group of bilingual professionals who meet monthly

to look at the Spanish reality both for ourselves and to challenge the city. 10 minutes, okay. I am not Hispanic, so I am speaking to you as somebody who works for the Hispanics, and sometimes that's a different reality. In the course of the past 14 years, there have been issues. The issues have changed. In 1985 when I came here, there probably were about 2,000 Hispanics. It is very difficult to get any kind of number verification. The most we have is the census. Probably at this point those of us that work with the Hispanics talk about probably 5,000 Hispanics. The Hispanics do not identify themselves as Hispanic. They identify themselves as Dominicans or Mexicans or Puerto Ricans or Colombians, and those are the four major groups that are here. The new immigration that has come in is family oriented. The initial immigration were mostly men that came here to work, and it was a temporary time here. With amnesty in 1985, people have gotten their documents, have filed for their families and their children, so the new immigration now are families that are coming in with papers. What happens is that their papers come through at the wrong time for the school year, and so this is one of the conflicts and assume, having waited many years to get their documents, that once they have

them, they're willing to come, they want to come, and sometimes it's in April which is not a good time for the school. So it's one of the things we need to work on.

The school system has adapted to this new immigration. They have extended their ESL program. From the time I first came in 14 years ago, the school was very welcoming through a Mr. Ankerberg who was very attentive to the Hispanics, and it was in one school, elementary, junior high and high school. They have extended to other elementary schools. They have adapted to where the children are living and to the numbers.

What happens is sometimes we make a decision on numbers in geography, and what we need to look at is a total staff preparation when you bring any immigrant group into a new school. In terms of on-going staff development, I think that it's not -- this is not a monopoly on the school system. I think it's any piece of a city. What we need to look at is that nationally, state wise and locally there is an anti-immigrant mentality. Here in New Hampshire we have asked an English only law which will have some repercussions.

The first contact that a new immigrant would

have would be with the school office, so I think that the ESL program is very welcoming, that the school system has looked at it structurally, and perhaps one of the things we need to look at is what their first contact is in terms of telephone and people receiving them, that we need to look at different immigrant groups not from a competitive point of view but from a different -- that people come with differences, that some groups come perhaps more educationally oriented or for different reasons.

And the sense that historically any immigrant group that has come has wanted to retain their culture and their language as best possible, and so they had their own schools and churches and stores wherein a new immigrant time when people do not have those communities, and so the home is where they can retain their culture and their language. So I think we need to affirm that people speak English in their home, and probably the mother is the key person for doing that and not to ask them to speak English at home because they want to, because they live here, but they also want to continue to teach their children to do that.

I have had experiences of calling and being well received in the schools. I have experienced

people saying "your people," and also why can't they call for themselves? And I think that's the first contact kind of thing that we need to look at.

From the student point of view, I think that the students need to be taught that when there are differences that we need to look at solutions and that everything that happens is not a problem of discrimination so that students need also to be oriented. They need perhaps more conflict resolution skills so that when things come up, they are able to look at them as a societal or a human conflict and not a discrimination and that we need to consciously call for more leadership in the Hispanic community so that they can be their own voice. I should not be here speaking for the Hispanics. That is an injustice.

For the parents their initial orientation is very difficult because they do not speak English, and so that first contact in the school needs to be looked at. The schools have responded by putting into Spanish a lot of their paperwork. Probably the gift to the city has been hiring Susana Middleton who people can access her through the telephone at any point and through the schools. There is still an insensitivity in terms of other paperwork, people that aren't as sensitive that send home paperwork that

people cannot read or understand and get very confused on, and also that most of the immigrants that are coming in from the Hispanic community are coming in from rural areas, and they come in primarily for economic reasons and that it's not just a language and a culture. It's a whole coming from the ranch and the animals into a city school system. So there are a lot of transitional pieces.

The hiring of new teachers in the city, I think that we can present ourselves as, number one, that we present ourselves in terms of curriculum. I think we need to present more the diversity that we are in Nashua. That kind of thing that Dr. Cote was talking about I really appreciate because I think that we need to have some kind of a structure where there can be on-going dialogue so that when something arises it doesn't become a problem, but there's immediately something in place that has time and its opportunity that people can plug into.

I think that basically we need to look at new immigrants as a gift, not as a problem. I really would appreciate anybody that's Hispanic that can either collaborate or fight with me or whatever.

DR. FOURNIER: There may be questions from members of the Committee or from the audience.

SISTER BRACELAND: Is there anyone that's Hispanic that would be willing to address this? I feel very inadequate. Then I have to tell you that I present to you as an angle.

DR. FOURNIER: Okay. Thank you. Are there any questions?

MS. SHAH: I'm not here for the questions. I'm the second speaker.

DR. FOURNIER: Okay. So you are Jasmine Shah?

MS. SHAH: Yes. I'm Jasmine Shah, and I'm representing Indian community in New Hampshire. By profession I'm a dance teacher. I teach Indian classical dancing. I also work as a substitute teacher in school, not often but I try to whenever I can, and I do a lot of volunteer work in schools.

Now from Indian community, so far we haven't gone through any major problems as far as schools are concerned. My daughter passed to Nashua High School. I didn't go to any problem. My son is in elementary school right now. So from the school we don't have any problems, but what our students go through is among the kids themselves, just teasing here and there which is not a major problem, but for kids it is a problem. And I don't blame the kids because it's not



their fault. They don't understand because we haven't taught them to respect each and every culture. I think it's our fault. We have to teach as parents and in the schools, we should make sure that kids understand to respect other culture, other communities, not just in any ethnic or any other communities. We have to make sure. And as I understand in the school curriculum, it's very difficult for them to teach them about each and every country in this world, but I have a suggestion that all the schools, if they can help a celebration of each country whether it's their new year or something special, if they can do something like that. When all the kids in the schools are involved in celebrating that, then they will learn what other culture has to offer, and they will learn to treat other kids equally and to respect them.

That's my main concern, just to teach the kids to respect other culture and to teach them that the skin color doesn't mean everything. Everybody has different skin color, and they have to learn to respect that.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

MS. CHAPLAIN: Could you give some examples

of what is that in the school, the kind of teasing?

MS. SHAH: It's nothing major that's why I didn't emphasize that. But the kids teasing them, oh, you are different, you are brown or you are dark, so those kind of things. In few days I think they become friends, but it does go on, and I'm sure not just in Deerfield, New Hampshire, but I'm sure other communities must be feeling that too.

MS. CHAPLAIN: Has there been any staff response?

MS. SHAH: I go to the teachers and I tell them, and they have responded very well. Some of the time -- all the time parents don't go to teachers because we understand it goes on, today he's teasing and next they are friends, but some kids who are very sensitive will take it very hard. But so far my son and my daughter, they are both in different elementary schools, and I didn't have any problems with the teachers. They understood, even the counselors, they understand, and they have been very nice about it.

But the thing is that the teachers themselves are so busy with their paperwork and their studies that I don't think they have that much time to go into the depths of this -- which are small problem at this point can become major problems, so I think

community have to become more involved, and the teachers and school should allow the community to get more involved with these kind of issues.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Do you know how many students are here?

MS. SHAH: There are about 100 families in the Nashua area. I'm talking about just Nashua. And in high school right now, as far as I understand, about six to seven Indian kids are graduating that I know of. There are elementary schools in South Nashua that have major Indian students. I'm not sure exactly, but there are more younger kids -- there are more student in elementary than in high school and slowly, slowly we're a growing population. Many indians are settling in this area right now.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Have you heard any other students complaining of similar experiences that they were teased or?

MS. SHAH: Yes. We don't have any major discussion, but when we get together, then we talk about it, but nobody has complained as such. It's just the inner-topic I'm telling you and things that I know, but nobody has come to complain to me or to anybody. No major problems, but the small problems which I'm worried can become a major problem. That's

about it.

DR. METOYER: How long have you been in Nashua?

MS. SHAH: In Nashua since 1986.

DR. FOURNIER: Yes.

DR. HOULIHAN: Are you speaking just for Nashua there have been no major problems?

MS. SHAH: Yes, I'm speaking just for Nashua.

DR. HOULIHAN: Because I do know about other problems.

MS. SHAH: I do know about other areas in the state where there have been major problems, but Nashua, no. Nashua we don't have any problems.

DR. HOULIHAN: I hope to be able to speak later. Thank you.

DR. FOURNIER: Are there any other questions? Okay, we'll go to the third speaker, Helen Feng from the Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee.

MS. FENG: Hello. My name is Helen Feng, and I am the Chairman of Chinese Cultural Society of Greater Nashua, and I would like to make a little bit of background about this Chinese society. We start about 12 years ago because the new immigrants coming from Maling, China, we found that we need to have a

place for the newcomer to make friends and feel at home around this area, so when we first started it's around like a 35, 50 families, and then they are gradually growing approximately 150 or 200. It's in and out.

Sometimes when people get used to it, then they would drop out. Sometimes they come back. So right now we have approximately 100 families, and the family majorly would be around the Nashua area with included Manchester, southern part of Massachusetts. But from the statistically I got it a few years ago, not now, of date. The Chinese communities are very small in New Hampshire, even with the other races, and I understand is approximately .5 percent with all the minorities. Maybe it need to be corrected nowadays.

DR. HOULIHAN: It's 3 percent now, 3 percent minorities.

MS. FENG: At that time 10 years ago is around 25 percent. So the Chinese family we know about in Nashua area, approximate maybe like 50 families but maybe more. Like a lot of families that have been in this country for 30 or 40 years, like I came in this country like in 1960s, so a lot of them would not join the group, but mostly the people would join the group is the newcomers.

And as far as the background concern, most of the Chinese family settle down in New Hampshire or Massachusetts. Mostly are very professional, and the parents all went to school in this country, so all the parents understand the difficulty of a learning second language. A lot of parents go through these difficulties with their children, and so in general it may take a year or two for the children to learn the language, but I would like to make a little bit -- let people aware of it. Even I being in this country for 40 years, and I still have my accent. There's no way I can get rid of it.

And then secondly when people speak, because we have different way of speaking, and so we cannot speak perfect English, perfect grammar, but people sometimes will pick on us because of the difference, just small, maybe irrelevant, but people do pick on us. oh, gosh you know like he and she in Chinese. We don't have he and she and we don't have it, and it's just like when people learning Spanish. You know how hard it is to have mastered a second language, so I think in the community in general, I like English speaking people should understand if we can speak 80 percent or 70 percent correct grammar, we are very good.

In general we don't have any problems with the school. My children all grown up in New Hampshire, and they all very top students, and I think most people know that Chinese family pay very, very high priorities for their children in school. But right now our communities -- Chinese community, I'm only talking about Chinese communities -- we like to contribute. We like to make people aware of our culture, so we try very hard to try to support the community activities as an ethnic awareness, and sometimes we tried -- like we had some news in my son, people to come and play music in the library, and I found that out to my disappointment 90 percent come from our Chinese communities and very few outsiders. Outsiders, I mean other ethnics.

So it seems like there's not enough either advertising or what. Maybe you need that kind of thing to help out, and I did brought up this problem in the last Ethnic Awareness Committee, and the people said they will, they will try every effort to help us introduce our culture to these communities.

And presently I have to bring up one of this things. We have a young man. He's only 12 years old, and he's called Kevin Co, and he's working for his Eagle Scout project. And he single handed tried to

work with the Nashua library, and we are going to have a three-day exhibitions of Chinese culture, dancing calligraphy and music and costumes on May 22, and the library people help a lot, and they gave us space, and I think the only thing we don't know whether the schools have this kind of pamphlets or not, and so we try very hard, try to introduce our culture to the communities, but we like to have people get involved. We cannot just do it by ourselves.

DR. FOURNIER: Could you push the button to see if the microphone is on?

MS. FENG: Maybe it's not working. it may not be working then. So maybe I already have my 10 minutes. Sorry about it. But I do like the schools help a lot because where the children to know the difference and understand the tolerance of each races in order to make friends, I think where the school starts. So the school, it's the ground that we need to put more money in, give a little bit more culture diversity, things like that, activities to their students. So if the school cannot do it, please reach to the other minority communities just like Chinese Culture Associations. We love to share our culture with everybody.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you. Are there any



questions from the audience or from the Committee?

DR. HOULIHAN: Where is the Chinese Cultural Association located?

MS. FENG: We are volunteers. We have a P.O. box and our committee, the executive people working. It's all volunteers and elected. The library people would know us about it.

DR. HOULIHAN: Do you have a phone number?

MS. FENG: Yes. We have about four or five activities during the years.

MR. SERPA: I have two questions, at least two questions. The first question is: Does anyone on the panel have any information from the other Asian communities, the new communities like Cambodians, Vietnamese or do you have any idea how that's --

MS. FENG: I understand there is big Vietnamese communities in Manchester, but the problem in their community just like us. Like the Philippine communities, it's all by the group, created a group on our own, and most people serve in the committees are volunteers, and they may change year by year by elections, but officially sometimes we just by friendship wise we visit each other.

MR. SERPA: Second question is to Sister Nancy. It's interesting here that the Chinese and

other Asian communities seem to be assimilating, fitting in, learning the languages but for some reason. Hispanic communities are having a little more difficulty. Can you address that?

SISTER BRACELAND: I would be willing to address that experientially. I have not met a Hispanic that did not want to learn English, so that's a myth that the Hispanics do not want to learn English. A second piece is because they are in larger numbers, they are able to continue for a longer period of time without having to speak English. So there's not the immediate urgency, even though there is that immediate desire to learn English.

The Adult Learning Center has grown incredibly in terms of learning English. Their numbers have grown. They gave us those statistics, and also in terms of the perseverance of the people. I think if one of the things when you talk with a Hispanic community, learning English is critical because they come here to work, for economic reasons, and in terms of being able to get better jobs or in own job is understand better English is critical and also because -- I'm not positive on statistics -- I think Nashua is like 85,000 people. If we have 5,000 Hispanics, even though we can't verify, but that's the

number that we're looking at.

And the community now is about 40 years old, so there are people within the community now that will interpret for them. one of the problems we have is that children are now doing a lot of the interpreting for their parents.

One of the other things that the Hispanics speak about is they feel that when they are looked at in terms of their culture, it's just a matter of food and language, and so the other pieces for them to learn how to talk about themselves in terms of what culture really means in terms of their way of being and their own history.

DR. FOURNIER: We have a question for you. Could you speak to the issue of levels of language? There are some who say, well, kids can learn English very fast. They learn it on the school grounds, during recess, they learn it on the street, but when they come into a classroom there are different levels of language, there's academic language, and people say after a year they should be able to follow an American school curriculum. And according to experts in the field of linguistics, they say that it takes five to seven to even nine years to be equal to those who have English as a home language, as a language that they

speak all the time. It takes that long for a language minority student, even the best students, to reach the same level as their peers who are English background.

SISTER BRACELAND: I think experientially any of us that have tried to learn another language know what those steps are. I think students learn in different ways. For some people speaking is easier, hearing is easier; for others it's reading or writing. I think that when they have some kind of efficiency, then the expectation is that they have the proficiency in terms of writing and reading, and so for the students sometimes that's difficult because they can understand, but not always able to express and much less be able to put it into writing. That's one thing. The other thing is depends on the educational system that they came from in terms of what their skills are, so if they come being able have good skills in their own language, then they are able to make the transfer, this if they don't have a good base, then there's just a lot of other pieces. I do acknowledge here in the school, in the system that they have different levels and have walked with people as long as they need to do that, giving more hours initially and then cutting back. I think we need to reflect on our own experience of learning a language,

how long it takes and what are our difficulties in it.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you. Are there any other questions?

DR. BUFORD: I have a question for Sister Nancy also.

SISTER BRACELAND: I need a Hispanic up here.

DR. BUFORD: What kind of contact have you had with families where the family has been in the U.S. for a number of years, everyone speaks English, there's no accent? I know that when I was at, in my prior life, I talked to many students who had experienced some difficulties even though they were perfect English speaking people, they were bright or they wouldn't have been in college, and they talked about some of the other issues that they faced. Do you have contact with any of those people or do you have contact only with people or mainly with people where -- do you primarily have contact with people who have a language difficulty or for whom English is a second language?

SISTER BRACELAND: I think one of the things you asked me to address was the new immigrant. What happens with the Hispanic population is that it's now 35 or 40 years old so what we have are the early

Dominicans that have come are now English is their primary language, are beginning to go to college, are buying homes. The Puerto Rican community has been here longer and travels back and forth so a more mobile community. The Colombian population is a community that is coming into its own now and beginning to have students that in their family are the first ones to graduate from high school as well as to go to college. The Mexican community began in Manchester and has overflowed to Nashua initially were men, are now families and within the past three years are beginning to have children that are the first ones to go to high school and to college, and they are beginning to buy homes.

So what happens is there are a lot of skills in terms of moving into real estate, looking at college applications and all of those pieces, so they eventually are going to help one another. I think with a new immigrant, life is much more complicated. There are so many pieces to it. People come here not because they do not want to be in their country, but the major Hispanic population that is here is here for economic reasons and that education is part of the reason of why the present generation of parents are willing to work any job, any number of hours so that

their children will have an education. They see their life here in the light of their children more than that their own lives are going to change or that they will be able to be the professional person.

The problem with that is the expectations that the schools have to cope with because the parents have sacrificed everything to come here. They want their children to be doctors, engineers. So we need to work with parents so that parents do not put undue expectations on your children which then has all of those expectations in terms of school. Once again, I really need to say that I speak as an angle.

DR. FOURNIER: Are there any students who have had experience in English As A Second Language who want to talk about their experiences in the school?

SISTER BRACELAND: Yes. We need you because you people have the experience of it.

DR. FOURNIER: Could you give us your names, please?

ALEX MONTOYA: My name is Alex Montoya from Colombia. My experience when I came here was really sad. I came to all different other schools and different because we see different people from other countries, you know nothing about-the language, you

sort of scared when you speak because you think everybody get laughing about you, say. So you think it's bad for you, but when you go to the ESL program or you are in the other regular class, you get friends, American friends, that can help you. Say when you say something wrong, they help you and that best form you have to speak. Let the Spanish, do you know the Spanish now. Now you have to learn English. Now you speak English, forget about the Spanish, but always speak your same language, and you got friends, how they speak good English now, so he help me when I came here. Everything that my teachers and my friends say, teachers letting me in Spanish so he got more than me. I only got one, probably once and Carlos can tell you for about that.

MR. BRADLEY: Did you tell us how long you've been here in this country?

ALEX MONTOYA: One year and four months.

MR. BRADLEY: Did you know any English before you came?

ALEX MONTOYA: In Colombia you learn English but English from England or something. And you learning more writing than speak. It's different presentation, so you can say it's different when some people say I got good news and my report class got 10,



90 but when some person can tell me something they say, sorry, I don't understand English. I can't tell you that so foreign or sad when you speak.

MR. BRADLEY: And how do you compare your experience with other Hispanics you know?

ALEX MONTOYA: My compare probably the same with other people. You came and you know nothing but you start learn. You started now Latin American. Those are the vision of the future of progress. You know how to look, where for you the better and some universities you have to know everything about that. You have more -- you feel good about your Colombian people or the Spanish people when the Americans say you're a good man, you speak good English, and you are Spanish now so don't forget that.

MR. STEWART: Alex, you're not off the hook yet. When you arrived here at school, was there an English As A Second Language program for you, and did you participate in it?

ALEX MONTOYA: I don't know. I hear about one of my teachers say do my homework and I practicing at home, watch TV, listen to music. Everything about that.

MR. STEWART: So there wasn't a specific tutor or a sign helper with the language?

DR. HOULIHAN: Repeat the question to him again.

ALEX MONTOYA: Yes, it was painful. The teacher, they help me.

MR. STEWART: Thank you.

MR. SERPA: One other question. What would you do if you could improve the program to change it to make it even better for the next students who come along? How would you do that?

ALEX MONTOYA: I don't know. The program now is good. It's better. They issued, write easy have to know all the English now" the grammatical. You learn about the story who learn the -- you don't have to change nothing and you continue, and we can learn more if you continue to speak the language and they help you.

MR. SERPA: How many students are there per ESL teacher?

ALEX MONTOYA: A lot. Many.

MR. SERPA: Do you know how many ESL?

ALEX MONTOYA: Probably 50.

MR. SERPA: Per one teacher?

CARLOS: They like change. Like there's three teachers right now teaching ESL, and they choos like each classes, and they have visitors, like

volunteers that they help us too. So they have like in total like five, so it's two rooms and Miss Dakrus teach one subject and Mrs. Pina another one, and they divide it, they divide it among students. Like if I am only spend like a whole class of 20, then the 20 go to the other subject. If it's health with Mr. Ankerberg and the other class teach English, like they switch. Stuff like that.

MS. CHAPLAIN: Carlos, how long have you been here?

CARLOS: Four years. I come in 194.

MS. CHAPLAIN: Where are you from?

CARLOS: Dominican Republic, and then I go back to my country, and then I came back again so.

MS. TAYLOR: How was your adjustment?

CARLOS: When I first came? When I first came it was kind of hard because the school I went, I was an ESL student, but not as many as now. And when I went down there, it like -- I don't know. Like do stuff. Like I would be walking in the hallways, and people be stopping me and they be talking to me in English, and I'd be like me no English and like no. And, you know, and then they make fun of me sometimes and stuff but not like all of them, some of them. And when I come to Nashua High School, it was all right.

Almost like a few problems, like most of some teachers, like if he is with me in a class and he can't understand it, and I try to help him and the teacher doesn't like him, and she will be like don't speak Spanish over here. We're in America. That's not cool. It's like you're in America, you have to speak English.

MS. TAYLOR: How did that affect you?

CARLOS: A lot because I got people say like many times, you're in America, you have to speak English and make fun of me and stuff. Like the other day I was speaking Spanish with my friend. His name was Carlos too. He knew much more English than me, s we were in guidance, and we talk. I told Carlos something in Spanish about my credits, that they went down, and we were talking about it, and she's like, hey, you can't speak Spanish over here. Would you like it if everybody speak French in front of you? I'm like, you know, I don't know no French so it doesn't really matter.

MS. TAYLOR: Did you find yourself adjusting better with a student-on-student relationship rather than an adult?

CARLOS: Adults, like they try to help me where they could, and like most of the students trying

to help me too, but I have some battles sometimes with the students. I'll be walking by and then they push me, and I couldn't do nothing but I don't know nothing SO.

MS. TAYLOR: So if you were to have a say so as far as giving us some counsel as far as how to or what to do with a new student coming into the school, what would your suggestions about? How should we welcome --

AUDIENCE: A new student?

MS. TAYLOR: Ah-ha.

AUDIENCE: Well, many new students will come and I help them when I can, but right now if there comes a new students, like we volunteer, either him or me or another person, that we volunteer, and we'd be like, oh, I can walk you to his class and explain to the teacher he don't speak no English, and we talk anything we can do, you know, try to help her and him or her. Like in gym class there's three new kids, and I have to be like with them, and I tried my best if I can. I don't know that much English either but, you know, I try.

MR. STEWART: Carlos, are you with these friends in the gym class on your own or does the school have a buddy system of some sort?

CARLOS: They ESL program, they came to the ESL program, so they send them to gym, and I told Mr. Ankerberg, he's the head, I told him I wanted to volunteer to help, so I don't know if somebody else willing, but I told him I wanted to volunteer, and I went to the class.

MR. STEWART: Thanks.

MR. ANKERBERG: Maybe I can just address that. I'm Mark Ankerberg, the English As A Second Language head. And, yes, we do try to buddy them up with particularly students who are in the ESL program a little more proficient in the English language, and we try to find someone to take them to lunch or go to gym class or walk them to a new class or something like that.

MR. STEWART: Thanks.

DR. FOURNIER: Any other questions?

MS. GOMEZ: Can I talk about my experience?

DR. FOURNIER: Yes. Could you give your name before you start, please?

MS. CHAPLAIN: Thank you very much.

MS. GOMEZ: Good morning. I'm Laura Gomez. I'm from Colombia. I am in 11th grade, so when I was just -- my father told me that if I wanted to go to one university or what do you want to do, so I have to

choose. It's difficult and I say, okay, I have to learn English because I need it for any profession that I choose, so I say I can -- I don't know anything or I can go and learn English and then come back and study. So I came here, and when I went to the school, I say I want to go to 12th grade, and then I did and I didn't pass it because, you know, I didn't know enough English and they put me in 9th grade but and I say, okay, that's okay, I go to 9th grade. I don't care if I graduate here. I just want to learn English. So with the time I learn more and more, and I want more and more and the people help me, and I just wanted to watch TV in English and just listen to music in English, and I just wanted in English. But when I came here to this school -- my other school I have my classes in Spanish, and I say I don't want this. I want some more. I want challenge for me, and then when I came here, I heard that the ESL program was all in English, and I said, oh my God, that's great for me. I want it.

And then I did my exam, and I didn't know enough grammar, and I don't write so well, so the people help me, and now I feel like proud of myself, and I say that's what I wanted. And now I am an A honor roll student and that's good for me. And I

think, oh, my God, the country help me, really help me.

And the people who's around me and I say, oh, my God, how can you do it, and I say, I can and I like the challenge, and I told my counselor, and I told her that I wanted regular classes in English, and they say okay, if you want it, you can go. I know I'm not going to do so well, but I want it and I go to do it.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Laura, do you experience any kind of people teasing you, your students, other students teasing you because of accent or because of the language difficulty?

MR. EPAPHRAS: Yes. Yes, but I say I don't care. I don't care. I just learning and that's it. One day I go, I'm going to be like you so I don't care.

MR. SERPA: Do the teachers know that the other students tease different students? Are they aware of that, that it goes on?

MS. GOMEZ: Yes. Sometimes they know but, you know, they know that we don't pay attention about it so.

DR. FOURNIER: Any other questions? Okay,



we'll call then. Thank you very much. Did someone else want to speak? Yes, two of you. Go ahead. Would you give your name, please?

LAURA: Hi. My name is Lilian. I was born in the Dominican Republic, and I have to talk about what she said about the parents. My parents came here for me, for me to learn English, for me to have a better opportunity to go to college. They don't think about themselves. They think about us, the children, and that's one of the reasons they don't learn English. They want to learn, but they don't have the opportunity to.

And second of all, about the ESL programs, what I would do to make them better, I would make small classes and maybe more teachers. And from my experience when I came here, I have a year and a half year here, and I used to be here before. The first time it was so hard, but the second time it was good because I went to junior high, and they have ESL there, so I had a lot of Spanish friends so it was easier for me. What else? And when I have a problem, I always go to Miss Migneault and my ESL teachers because they are so good, all of them.

MS. TAYLOR: Do you feel pressured living up to your parents' expectations?

LILIAN: Yes. My mother is a lawyer, so I really have to look up to her.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Are there any other questions? Okay, the next one. Would you give your name?

MS. ROBERT: My name is Theresa Robert, and I'm from Mexico, and I have been here just six months, and I'm still a little bit afraid. And most of my classes are regular classes that I have and I don't speak with no one. I don't have any American friends. I'm really afraid. I just have Spanish. My English I practice in my ESL classes, with my teachers, at home because my stepfather is American, but from there my other classes here, my regular classes, I really do not speak any English.

The teachers that -- because they know that I'm not from here they don't ask me anything, so I really do not participate in those classes. I know that's bad, but what can I do? I'm still afraid. But the other students, they don't do anything to me. They just don't talk to me but they don't tease me. Nothing like that. But I wish after I make some American friends to have some American friends, but for now I'm good. I'm okay. I've been having a lot of help with my teachers, my ESL teachers. They help

us a lot. And I would like for the new students that they are coming to see if the school could give us more teachers. We really need more ESL teachers. And that's it. The classes are great. We learn a lot, and I really thank to all of them.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you. Are there any question? Yes.

MS. CHAPLAIN: In your regular classes have you ever asked the teachers to please call on you or is that too scary a thing to go?

MS. ROBERT: No, I haven't. They. Just -- maybe they talk to me when no other students are there. If I have a problem, I always wait until the bell rings so most of the students are gone, and then that's the time when I speak to the teachers if I had a problem, some questions, if I didn't understand something but before, no.

MR. BRADLEY: Could you say your name again?

MS. ROBERT: Theresa Robert.

AUDIENCE: I want to speak with these two girls. They want me to translate for them, and they are also students at the school.

DR. FOURNIER: Okay. Go ahead.

AUDIENCE: I'm from the Dominican republic. My name is ---- and I'm from the Dominican Republic.

MARIA PEREZ: My name a Maria Perez. I'm a translator. I'm Puerto Rican. She wants to say about her experiences when she first came from the Dominican Republic. She's been here three years. She first came to Penacook and then Fairground. She finished 9th grade over there, and it was very difficult for her. She had an experience that she will never forget. One of the American students told her while she was speaking to Spanish friends that she must speak English or return to her country. She says she did not know what to do. She ignored them and she's still studying hard.

DR. FOURNIER: Could you give her the mike when she speaks. Some people understand some Spanish.

MARIA PEREZ: Okay. She says she ignored them, and she just keeps on studying because she came here to learn a profession. And she says that she never wants to miss school and she has A and B grades because she wants to make her mother proud. She said her mother made an effort to get residency for them, for her and her family and because she wanted them to come here and study, and she wants her to get a profession to make her mother proud.

She says sometimes it feels lonely because it's only four in her family, and sometimes she tries

to trust or speak with friends but she doesn't have any. She says that people here are different. They are not the same like in her country, even though everybody's not the same, but you can't trust everyone. They just want to say about a teacher here in one of the classes that they feel uncomfortable with her because they feel that they have been picked on, that any time they either speak about a class or anything, they are always picked on. But the other American children speak, she wouldn't say anything to them, and there are only three Spanish girls in the class and they are picked on. She says that she wanted to make the point that she feels uncomfortable that she talked to her, and one day she will learn enough to be like everyone else.

DR. HOULIHAN: What do they want to be when they grow up?

MARIA PEREZ: She wants to be a policewoman or a lawyer. She wants to be a psychologist or a policewoman.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

MR. EPAPHRAS: I have a question to you. She said that she finished 9th grade. Did she finish in Spanish or in English?

MARIA PEREZ: Okay. They went to Penacook and Fairground and here in Nashua High at ESL program They all learn ESL program. She says that Mr. Ankerberg, well, his wife helped the children a lot because she's always interested in them learning and also he's a great help. She said Penacook, she had a teacher, his wife with an assistant teacher. The assistant teacher always made her feel bad, and she had a lot of problems with that. Her mother wanted to speak up. She said she always remembers those things.

She says she does not want to complain only about the bad things. She wants to say there are good things too. She said in one of her classes this boy was throwing spitballs or something at her. They asked her if she wanted to complain or charge him, she did not, but at least she felt there was somebody there that helped there. She wants to make a point that there's good stuff that happens in school.

DR. FOURNIER: Okay. Questions?

MR. SERPA: I just want to know how's the communication between her family, her parents and the school?

MARIA PEREZ: Excuse me?

MR. SERPA: The communication, are they sending information in Spanish to her parents or are

they contacting the schools?

AUDIENCE: Susana Middleton, she's the source. She sends information to the parents and to the students, and if there's any problems, they go to her.

DR. FOURNIER: Yes.

MKR. STEWART: I'd like to ask an open question to anybody in the audience or here, but then I'll single out Sister Nancy, but the question is: What is the interplay between issues of language, learning and race in the people that come from diverse countries in the Spanish speaking world of the diverse number of shades of skin and is that --

MARIA PEREZ: Why do you ask that?

MKR. STEWART: Why do I ask that? Sometimes I suspect the answers, but I need you to comment on it.

MARIA PEREZ: I don't know exactly what you mean.

MR. STEWART: And actually Sister Nancy could well answer this, but I'd like to have anybody here answer or respond to that and comment and say it's a worthless question.

MARIA PEREZ: I'm not quite clear on your question.

MR. STEWART: Let me try to clarify it.

This panel will hear a variety of testimony relating to the advantages and the disadvantages of trying to enter the Nashua school system or some other school system speaking only one language other than English. We will also hear from people who will comment on their experiences as African Americans.

However, when the diversity of people that come here from Spanish speaking countries hit our shores suddenly discover that some of them are grouped in the African American category with no sensitivity to their other cultural attributes, I'm wondering if there would be any comment that would be appropriate in this gathering to the reaction of educators or other students in the halls or otherwise to issues of race as well as of linguistic background? I hope that's not too many words to cloud the issue.

SISTER BRACELAND: Can I just hit a couple of things? One is that we as Americans categorize all people who speak Spanish as Hispanics. I have not heard any Hispanic identify themselves as Hispanic. People identify themselves in terms of their own culture.

Also, when Hispanics go, and anyone goes, to a hospital or doctor there's a form, including I think



in the schools, but I wouldn't put my life on it, that says what is your ethnicity, and it's very difficult because the core one for somebody that might in looking at them be black, they would put down say Dominican because that's how they see themselves. How do you identify yourself. When you come into a new culture all of a sudden you have to identify yourselves. When you're in your own culture, you don't have to do that usually, so that causes a lot of conflict. I say that in terms of being with people when they fill out forms.

The other thing is that within the Hispanic community we presume that because people speak Spanish that crosses all of the other -- so they should all be able to come together, and people that are Colombians are very different from people that are from the Caribbean, and people within the Caribbean are very different, their food, their history, the way they talk, even their manner of speaking. So within the Hispanic community there are differences, and then when you cross the race Hispanics, I think it's probably the Dominicans that would have more obvious black traces. That's a generalization. And the Puerto Ricans, but they do not identify themselves as black. They identify themselves as Puerto Ricans and

Dominicans.

I would like to just say one thing. I tried to get Hispanics to come with me today. They would not come because culturally anything that had human rights to them has a punitive repercussion, and so that's just for you to understand that there's a trust level here because in their own country that this would not be like an open forum. That would move toward suggestions. It would immediately have some kind of repercussions and probably that would be punitive to both them and their families.

DR. FOURNIER: I think we're sensitive to that issue.

MR. STEWART: There was a question over here too.

DR. FOURNIER: One quick question because we have to move on to keep our schedule. Please, go ahead.

AUDIENCE: I don't have a question. I just wanted you to hold on for a minute because some of the students here who are wanting to tell their side perhaps and waiting for it to be safe are not understanding what you're asking. So I just wanted to let them to know a little bit about what you said in case they had something they wanted to say.

DR. FOURNIER: We have 30 seconds for a quick question to keep on schedule.

MR. EPAPHRAS: With Carlos and Nancy and -- all the other people you're talking about American friends, and when you say "American friends," this is with Nancy also, what do you mean by "American friends"?

AUDIENCE: In like not just white people, but like we're about Americans, like people like born here. Like I don't have no problems like with any kind right now. Like Macober himself, he would be like helping me many times. Like people are all different, you know, different color of the skin, like, you know, not white, you know. They can help me before, and I'm just saying that we're not just against nobody. I'm just saying they just, you know.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you. We'll go on with the next panel member. Melvin K. Roulette, Sr., parent and Tammy Sanders. Since you're two, you would have 20 minutes. But try to keep it short.

MR. ROWLETT: Good morning. My name is Melvin Rowlett. I'm a parent of a student of Nashua High School. His name's Macober Rowlett. I think on a different level from what we've heard so far, our form is more or less complaints about racial

complaints and also complaints as being treated different as an individual.

Macober has had several problems here at Nashua High as a result of the discriminations or the differences. Macober came to Nashua High from Penacook. He had been coded at Penacook. Prior to Penacook he requested to be decoded upon entering Nashua High because he wanted to work towards his scholarship, and he wanted to play college basketball, and he felt that this would deter him from achieving this. When he came to Nashua High, his grades were really good. He was As, Bs and Cs and of that nature. Everything was going good until he got into the basketball program here at Nashua High. It was his first experience of being treated I'll say different as a result of someone else's feelings towards African Americans or whatever.

To explain this to you, he was going to play basketball in Cambridge, Mass., and his coach made this comment, "We're going to Massachusetts to play these black kids." And Macober being the type of person he is said, "What difference does it make what color the kids are? We're going to play basketball."

So nothing else was said until they were in Boston, Cambridge, and they were in the locker room,

and Macober said to the coach, he said, "I'm going to play my heart out for you today." And the coach told him, "You don't have to do a damn thing for me. I'm not a racist."

And from that point on, he started having problems with his coach. I brought this up to the athletic director and nothing was done about it. This kid was treated really rotten on the basketball team, even to the point where he was maintaining his grades and the coach had kept him sitting on the bench, leave him on the bench. He would play him maybe two minutes and put him back on the bench. Another student that was on the team had several Fs I guess it was, and they had a waiver so this kid could play, and this kid played every game while Macober sat on the bench, so that sent a message to him that you can do good grades but if I don't like you, you're still not going to achieve anything.

He had problems with some of his teachers where he requested aid in some of his subjects, and they refused to give him this aid, and as a result of this, his grades started falling. He was suspended because the teacher didn't like a gesture that he made when she said he made a comment to her, and he had a three day in-house suspension, then she wanted to give

him a three day out of school suspension because he refused to go to the nurse. This thing had a psychological effect on Macober. It came to the point where I would get calls from the nurse to come to the school and pick him up because he was throwing up.

Well, that was a nervous condition. His nerves were shot, and they continued to pound on him to the point where I was afraid to leave him alone because when I would bring him home, he would just break up. And you hear about kids committing suicide and stuff like that, and this is one of my concerns because this kid was really reaching out for help. He told me, he said, "Dad, you know, I don't like the school. People don't like me." He said, "I get in trouble because I'm trying to make friends. I'm trying to keep people off of me."

And he said, "I could leave the house pretending I'm going to school and not go." He said, "but I won't do that to you, and I won't do that to myself." He said, "I want my education."

Like I said, his grades were really bad to the point where he received a report card and he wrote me this note.

It said "Dad, when you see this, please don't get mad. I know what I did wrong. You have

never seen a report card like this in your or my life. Can't you see I'm having problems? I can't concentrate. I have too much on my mind. I promise you that the next one will be better. Please don't get mad at me. I'm trying my hardest to work with it, work with all of this on my mind. The reason why I fool around in class is to get the stuff out of my head. That's another reason why I go to The Boys' Club. Dad, I need to get out of here before it's too late. I hope everything I write you, you take to heart. Love, Macober."

This is a kid that was reaching out. He's still reaching out. Then he had an incident with the police here at Nashua High. When I investigated what was going on, I understand there was some kids in this area called Mines Falls, and they smoke, break or whatever, and one kid said that he had a gun. One of the other kids called their parents and reported it to their parents that one of the kids had a gun. This parent contacted the bus department. The bus department contacted the school, the police or whatever.

They had a policeman standing by the bus that this kid was assigned to, and Macober and some other kids didn't have the bus pass that day, and this

bus monitor told him to go back into the school and get bus passes. They had to walk past this policeman that was standing by this bus where the suspected gun carrier was, and as Macober and these other kids walked by, this policeman singled out the three minorities in the group, Macober, a Mexican kid and a Puerto Rican kid, and he told them to stop. This bus monitor told the police that she had sent them into the school to get the bus passes, and she told the kids to go in. They went into the school. The policeman followed them into the school, grabbed the Mexican kid in the hallway in front of all the students and frisked him.

Then he went into the office, he grabbed, told Macober, he said, "Try to leave if you want, and I'll throw you down and arrest you forcibly." He dragged Macober into the principal's office, slammed him against the wall and started frisking him down, started hitting him down. When he was frisking him in his private area, he was hitting him with his fist. He didn't find anything of course, but Macober was asking "What is this all about?"

Meanwhile, the principal stood there, the vice principal -- was it vice principal? It was one of the principals, a vice principal was standing



there, never said anything to the policeman. Then the policeman searched the other kid. I went over the next day and checked on this. I asked if the policeman searched any of the kids on the bus that the suspect was supposed to be on. The policeman did not search any of those kids. The bus driver after dropping the students off did find a gun. It was, however, a toy gun but it could have been a real gun. If the policeman had been doing, what he was supposed to be doing, instead of singling out these minorities to harass them, he would have found it.

Then the bus monitor wrote a complaint to the principal. I asked the principal to see this complaint, and I was told the only way I could view this complaint was if I had a subpoena, and he asked me not to say anything because he didn't want it made public.

I understand these other kids and these other speakers, there are good things, and I'm happy for these people, and there are like, the other kids said, some bad things, and a lot of the bad things have dropped on Macober.

DR. FOURNIER: Are there any questions?

REVEREND PERKINS: I have one question, Mr. Rowlett or Macober. Did you report the complaint,

register a complaint at the police department?

MELVIN ROWLETT: No, I didn't. I didn't register because of fear of repercussions. He is an athlete and he is back and forth from home to The Boys' Club, and I didn't want anything to happen while he was out there.

MR. SERPA: Question. Is there a guidance counselor that you talked to?

AUDIENCE: Yes, there are guidance counselors here. However, whenever I have meetings with the guidance counselors, it's always brought up that they want to code him, they wanted to code him again. No matter what my complaint is, they get around somehow to this coding thing. He did not want to be coded. He had the experience of being coded, and he didn't get anything out of it.

I had an experience with a guidance counselor at the beginning of the 197, 198 year. Macober only attended school three days at the beginning of the semester, and I received a call from the guidance counselor, and I went to the guidance counselor, and she told me that he was failing in a class, and I wanted to know how can you say he's failing when he's only been in school three days? So she had her mind made up already. It's like a stigma.

MR. SERPA: Just for the record, coding is special education?

DR. HOULIHAN: Special education, yes, IEP.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Rowlett, what age level in school did that three-day failure take place in? Which school was it that after three days --

MELVIN ROWLETT: Nashua High. And at that time when she told me that he was failing, I said, "Okay, I would like for him to have a tutor. He's failing. I want a tutor." And I never received it, and there was nothing ever done about it.

MR. SERPA: When he was coded, what were his experiences?

MACOBER ROWLETT: While I was coded, I was coded in 7th and 8th grade, and basically my whole day was to read a scripture from a little article out of the newspaper, and the rest of the day was myself. I could do anything I wanted to, so I really didn't learn anything those days and those years, in 7th and 8th grade. That's the reason why I wanted to be off being coded, one reason, because I didn't learn anything. They didn't teach me nothing but read an article in a newspaper and that was it.

DR. FOURNIER: Are there any other questions?

DR. METOYER: Is there a mental health center that's involved in some community liaison too for occasions such as this?

MELVIN ROWLETT: What was that again?

DR. METOYER: Is there a mental health center that's involved that has some school liaisons that might be helpful in situations such as this?

MELVIN ROWLETT: They wanted me to take him to a ADHD clinic, U. Mass. Medical Center to have him tested, but I didn't do that. I haven't done that.

DR. METOYER: How long ago was that suggested?

MELVIN ROWLETT: Recent. This was this year.

DR. HOULIHAN: Marie, that is an evaluation process that they send them through for a certain number of testing to be done.

DR. METOYER: Attention deficit disorders?

DR. HOULIHAN: That's correct. Or it could be learning disabled. It could be whatever.

MR. STEWART: First of all, if you're willing, sir, to put Macober's letter into the record here as well as any notes of your own, certainly the letter, I think it would be important down the road to have that be very well documented.

MELVIN ROWLETT: I'm fortunate that Macober is the type of person that he is because if he was any other type, all this stuff that's going on in these schools and threats and these bombs and all this kind of stuff, the school has a lot to do with that. They blame the parents, you know, the parents are not paying attention to what their kids are doing or whatever. Some of the experiences that the kids have in school can trigger these type of things off.

DR. HOULIHAN: That's true.

MELVIN ROWLETT: Some of the things that he's gone through could trigger these things off. We never received an apology from the school or the police department for the way he was harassed. Now some kid would have taken that and used it as an excuse to hurt someone.

MR. SERPA: One more question for Macober. Can you just tell us a few or any experiences you've had with teachers at the school?

MACOBER ROWLETT: Well, in loth grade I was in a math class, and I asked my teacher if I could have help, and she looked at me in my face and said, "Who are you to ask for help? You can go to the office now."

Because she supposedly wrote down saying

that I made a fist and like I offended her, so she sent me to the office for that. And one day, the same teacher in this math class, I wasn't feeling right. I had throwing up -- you know how you throw up and you have that taste in your mouth? I asked if I could go to the nurse because I was probably going to do it again, and she goes, "No, you can't go to the nurse." And so I said, "All right."

I asked politely one more time I said, "Can I go to the nurse please, you know, because I don't want to throw up on the floor, you know, kind of inappropriate?" So she said no again, and then she passed out a test, and she kept -- like she passed all the tests out, and I was looking at the test, doing the test. I was trying to clear my throat to get it out, and then she just came up to me and snatched the test out of my hand and said, "Just get out of here. Get out of here go to the nurse. Wherever you want to go, just go." And I said, "No, I'm fine now. I want to do this test." I don't have a test that day, so I said, "I'm going to finish this test. I'll do it. She goes, "No. Get out of here. I'm going to write you up. I'll call the principal down if you don't get out of here now." So I just left, walked out.

MELVIN ROWLETT: As a result of that, I get

this letter from the Nashua Senior High School that Macober was being suspended for three days; nature and date of infraction, improper behavior in class; length of suspension, three days, out of school suspension.

And, of course, I couldn't allow that, so I wrote a letter to the school: "To whom it may concern, I am hereby initiating an appeal to the suspension of Macober Rowlett pending an investigation of the issues charged. Please accept this note as notice."

And I came over to the school for that issue. You cannot suspend someone for refusing to go to the nurse.

MS. TAYLOR: How many teachers did you have problems with? Was it just one in particular?

MACOBER ROWLETT: It was a couple of teachers. Really the main teacher was that math teacher that really got, like really picked on me, you know. But like this year I have an art teacher -- it's not just me but it's a crowd of us that she just particularly keeps her eyes on us most of the time except for the rest of the class.

Like our crowds, like we have Puerto Ricans. We just hang out, and we sit there and do our artwork. She has her friends, like the good kids, but like the students that are like right, you know. The kids will

be and the class will be talking, all of the kids, and she will look at us and tell us to be quiet while the rest of the class is talking and the other kids in the class will be swearing and cussing and stuff like that. She does nothing about it, nothing, but then she yells at us for just not talking loud but talking.

MR. BRADLEY: That's 20 minutes. Thank you.

DR. FOURNIER: Would you give your name, please?

MS. SANDERS: My name is Tammy Sanders. I have a daughter who is in the Nashua High School. She's been in the Nashua system since 3rd grade. Our troubles began the third week of 1st grade where she was told or I was told that she was never going to make it, quote, unquote, and she would have to be kept back, even though her grades were quite fine to go into the first grade, and there was nothing wrong with her except she was a chronic asthmatic and had been having trouble for years. But anyway the story, to capsule it in five minutes or less, is similar to Macober's.

A lot of various personnel of harassment, difficulties in just assessing just regular day-to-day things, being able to go to a room to get help for a test or even to get to the point to get extra help by



someone chronically ill. I think that what I really want to say mostly is that it's very hard to come forward to say things that are painful or humiliating as an experience in an institution where a child spends, what, 13 years of their life and about 35 hours a week of their lives where if they need to assess or get anything from anybody from this institution, and they are perceived for being different for any reason. I wouldn't be here today if it was one or two or three situations. I don't think anybody would be here for that or if it was one individual. I think I'll have to speak as a consensus between my own experiences growing up, my daughter's experiences and I've been blessed to know other people in other communities who are also assessed as being different, and the stories are always the same. It's the same attitude in an institution by too many people in here where there's not a welcoming, there is not a listening, there is not a respect. You're categorized automatically and you're treated from your first day to your last day here if you make it, and someone with better words than I used the term "psychologically tired."

And for students by the time they get to high school have had a number of these experiences,

especially being young and just learning, are definitely psychologically tired by the time to determine, 16 or so, whether they want to continue in this system or not. And many who have no voice who are not here today, who were not asked, who are afraid to speak or who don't want to dwell on this. These things are ugly things to talk about. It's a most difficult thing to be someone like ourselves, and some people here can relate to this. To say to other people who have no understanding about these circumstances or situations how difficult it is to talk. Nobody wants to dwell on this. Nobody wants this here. When you go to the persons who are supposed to be professional in talking to them and saying, "I see a problem. What can we do to work on it? Who can I talk to?" And they shut the door. How do you think the students must feel when they are within that system every day when there's no one who looks like them, who speaks like them, who has the experience that they can't even begin to open the door of dialogue and talk about it?

This institution is closed, and it's been too many years. This is the first time I can remember in my whole daughter's history that there has been a forum such as this with the school where they welcomed

this conversation. That has not happened in my experience, and I've talked to too many parents who have the same experience as well.

So, again, I'm very happy for the positive things. Recently in the last few months a group of us approached the school because we asked the people within the system who are also aware of these things and want to do something about it and are frustrated and don't have any outlet themselves to come together with us to work on these issues, and let's rectify it, but you've got to have a committed, understanding and dedicated group within the system itself to really understand the nature of these things so they can get rid of it. It really isn't as difficult as people think. It's not that hard. It can be done, but you've got to first acknowledge that there is something here, and you've got to listen to the people who are experiencing this. I think these things are very common human characteristics, so it shouldn't be that hard for people to do that.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

DR. BUFORD: What is your daughter's racial backgrounds?

AUDIENCE: I am Native American. Her father

is half Native American and half African American, so perception wise she has been identified as African American.

DR. FOURNIER: Any other questions?

MR. STEWART: In attempting to achieve change in the school, you have formed a group. In order for it to be effective, who are the most important people you need to have on your side?

MS. SANDERS: The administration, an understanding administration, an administration willing to go through whatever it takes to understand our issues and to have people from our own communities welcomed and involved in the circumstances. I think children especially need to see people who are similar or someone -- everybody feels that way. Human beings just naturally gravitate towards a commonality. We're visual people. That will never stop. That will never change and there's nothing wrong with that, but you need to show that there is an openness, a commitment to this.

MR. SERPA: When you say "administration," do you mean principals or superintendents?

MS. SANDERS: From the top all the way down.

MR. SERPA: What has been the response from superintendent level, School Board level?

AUDIENCE: I've never approached the School Board. I've had so much difficulty with the administration, I figured any higher up -- I actually went to the Department of Education at the state level and worked there and found the same consensus of opinion by them about the Nashua school system, so I never approached the School Board. I was not sure if there was anybody there who would listen.

I've been discouraged with some of the response. Up until the point when my daughter finally got a code for being health impaired, which is common for an asthmatic, it took that many years for them to acknowledge that code. I had to go through advocacy. I had to go through a whole other outside source in order just to establish that. Then we had a little more say so but it took that long. Before that the doors were pretty closed.

I think Assistant Superintendent Giuliano. He's superintendent now. I spoke with him once after the first grade, and that at least with his input got me a phone call back from the principal from the school, who would never even return the phone call on the first. So I had to go through that just to get a principal to call me back.

MR. STEWART: I understand from a previous

conversation that you contacted the Governor's Office of Legislative Education Committee, the State Department of Education, the State Board of Education, The Nashua Board of Education and The Nashua Mayor's Office. Are any of these people here today? Good. Who do you represent, sir, ma'am?

MS. DUNN: I'm Evonne Dunn from The National Board of Education.

MR. STEWART: Thank you for coming.

AUDIENCE: And I'm Joseph Giuliano, superintendent of the schools.

MR. STEWART: Pleasure to see you, too, sir.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. We'll go on to panel two, teachers and school administrators, and the first person to provide testimony is Deborah Migneault Assistant Principal, Nashua Senior High School; Susana Middleton, Social Worker/Home School Coordinator, Nashua Senior High School; Mark Ankerberg, ESL Coordinator, Nashua School Department; and Roger Desmaris, Head Guidance Counselor, Nashua Senior High School.

MS. MIGNEAULT: Let me tell you that we don't have at this point kind of prepared testimony. We kind of went with what we had talked about before, and we'll be opened up for questions etc. Susana gave

me a call this morning. She was still at the doctor's office, and she hoped to be here as soon as she could, so hopefully she will make it.

I'm Debbie Migneault. I was a social studies teacher at Nashua High School for 21 years; therefore, I do bring a teacher-on classroom perspective on this area as well as my first year in administration, and I got involved in this because I have been assigned ESL program, a School Next To A School which I'll talk about in a little while as well and, obviously, other departments. But as ESL administrator, if you like, Mark and I have worked very closely in that program, so I have become more knowledgeable in that field, and I've also had the opportunity to talk to Mr. Sanders because her daughter is in my House. I also take care of students from S through Z, all ESL program students and again the students involved in the School Next To A School, so I've had a diverse background, if you like, and have really tried to meet as many people as possible this year.

Let me tell you what I've kind of observed this year as administrator and tried to bring a classroom perspective as well. I will tell you Nashua High's experiences from what I've heard this morning

are not unique to Nashua High alone. It certainly is something that all public schools are dealing with, and I will also say that we have many lessons to learn from the Columbine incident and I want to keep that in mind as well because I think we are also dealing with student population at large and not just with minority students.

We really need to focus on individual attention and individual needs of minority and non-minority students, if you like. What I found here at Nashua High in the last 10 years is that it is very much a growing population of minority students, and I probably will stop during my presentation so Mark can give us some of those statistics which he brings with him, and most recent statistics would come from Mark. We as educators deal with a number of societal issues, obviously a school as a microcosm of society, so I need to kind of set a background setting as to what I found as administrator.

We are dealing with a minority of students here that I see on a daily basis, not the majority. You've heard some good things coming out of today. There are some issues that we have to be very concerned about. As an administrator this year, any actions that I've had to take, the majority of those



have been for students who have, if you want, behaved inappropriately in a classroom, used inappropriate language, resorted to violence in trying to either gain attention or to make a point in that class. But the majority of my cases are basically behavior issues.

One of the things I've tried to do, and I think other administrators here have attempted to do, is to look at the root cause of what's behind the student, what's causing this kind of reaction. And in attempting to deal with either services within the school or agencies outside the school to deal with some of those issues that we are looking at, but I have found primarily, obviously, we come from a very violent society at times, that violence is often used as a way to express a concern.

We are also a society of dysfunctional families, and I find many times that students have -- they are lock-key students. They have nobody at home that will help with homework, nobody at home to discuss issues with. And, again, I will emphasize we are talking minority. There are many parents I've spoken to for various reasons, not only for discipline issues, but just to touch base that the student is doing something right, that something is happening in

school that they would be aware of, etc. So we are trying to open that channel of communication with the parents and service agencies so we can deal more appropriately with the problems that we have.

We are also a much more mobile society, and what I found as well is this has caused a loss of extended family, even a grandparent. I was fortunate enough to be raised in a French family that had grandparent always in the house with me. I don't find too many of my students have that sense of rooting, if you like, in the family. I also see a lack of tolerance, a lack of respect for cultural differences, for ideological differences. If you don't look like me, if you don't think like me, then you're strange, and I don't want anything to do with you. And I'm finding that permeate society as well.

You'll also find a lack of respect when you're asked to do something, and I will tell you there are problems in how people request things because that can provoke some kind of reaction as well, but there's a lack of respect for the teacher in the classroom, sometimes for the parent that I found and vice versa. The parent doesn't respect the student. The teacher doesn't respect the student, so I really see a lack of mutual respect here.

I also have found that a real lack of or a sense of despair on the part of a youth, and what I found from that is they can go either way. They find themselves in isolation. They become more isolated, and we found that more and more as people felt they were kind of outcast from society. And you really need to -- I think we need to focus, and I think that's why I mentioned Columbine. That would be the lesson to be learned is how do we address every individual need?

The other thing students have done is to form gangs. I'm not saying anything new that Nashua had a gang, the -- if I got this right -- The Demon Criminals. They have been in the paper, etc. We have our own students who are working against. We have taken steps to break up, if you like, that gang here because what we found is that some of those gang members were becoming very intimidating to other students. Students were becoming very fearful.

You heard some of our students today talk about, quote, speak English or return to your country; you're in America speak English. That is very offensive to those individuals. It's very offensive to me. on the flip side, I want you to know that I've always also heard from people who are very intimidated

and fearful when they walk by a gang of students who they say who are speaking in a foreign language, who may be looking at them, who may be laughing at them, and I've had students say, "I don't know what they are saying, and I'm afraid to walk by them."

So we have to kind of understand perceptions from both sides. As we deal with individual cases and individuals themselves. I think I'm going to stop here for a second and ask Mark to give us some statistics on the minority population here, and I know we're limited to like five minutes or so, so we kind of spread out our information here.

MR. ANKERBERG: I can speak best about the students who come from a primary home language other than English, and as of the 1st in Nashua, we had approximately 1,497 students who we consider float students or primary home language other than English. Of those students, approximately 556 of them would be considered limited English proficient in that English was not their first language, and perhaps they have learned English through their educational career, still may not be totally fluent in the language. Of that 556, we as of April 1st were providing service to about 384 students in our ESL program.

We have seen an increase in our ESL program.

In the past four years our population has increased about 54 percent, around 257 in September of 195, and we are -- well, I just got back from some personal leave. Today is my first day, so I haven't gotten -- usually after April vacation we have more, and I have several telephone calls, schools calling, so I suspect that we are approaching 390 by now. There always seems to be an influx after the April vacation. District wide about 9 percent of the total school population are Hispanic, another 2 and a half percent are black, .26 percent are Native American, about 3 percent are Asian.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Is there a predominant Asian group? What group is the predominant, Vietnamese, Japanese, Chinese?

AUDIENCE: Well, I can tell you by language the majority are Chinese. As far as Asian languages, for example, Hindi we have about .6 percent. There has been an increase in the number of East Indians in Nashua, particularly from Budgerad Provence. After Chinese is Korean -- oh, I'm sorry. No. Let me back up. Because I have this in alphabetical order and not by numbers.

Vietnamese we have 3 percent in our population, and then 2 percent Mandarin or other

Chinese languages. Korean at 1.2 percent. We have Ergo at .3 percent, Hindu .6, Russian 2 percent. So we are getting an increasing number of Asian here.

MR. BRADLEY: Those percentages you just gave us are percentages of the total or percentages of --

MR. ANKERBERG: These are the total of limited English proficient. In my business we have a whole lot of terms and it gets confusing. That's why I started out trying to break it down. By federal law we are required to identify the primary home language every year, and that first figure I gave you of 1,497 are students who indicated that their first language was a language other than English. By the time -- now many of those students by the time they are ready for school are proficient in English, having been born here and growing up here. And then of that number, 556 of them would be what we would consider limited English proficient, and then 384 are receiving services, ESL services. So this breakdown of language that I gave you is of that 1,497 students.

MR. BRADLEY: When you said 9 percent Hispanic, that was 9 percent of the total population?

AUDIENCE: 8 percent of the total school population. The school district get October 1st

numbers, and according to this data, I have 13,449 students total. 7.92 percent are Hispanic.

MS. MIGNEAULT: Would you like me to begin dealing with some of the programs we have in place to deal with some issues?

DR. FOURNIER: Sure.

MS. MIGNEAULT: I know earlier, and I kind of only picked up some comments made earlier, there was a request that we bring in more adults, etc., and I would absolutely agree with that, but I do want you to know that we do have an adult mentoring program where we do have business leaders and other community people coming in to tutor our students whether it's during the school day or after school. We do have volunteers that come into our classrooms, and they are always welcome. But the district has a volunteer coordinator program that you can get in touch with those two individuals I think and volunteer any time you like. We do welcome people in our schools and can certainly use them.

We also have agreed for the district to offer and mandate to our staff, and eventually our students will go through, a diversity of sensitivity training workshops. We were made well aware of some of the issues that were brought up today, and are

moving to that direction as well. The elementary level we noticed there's been a very strong campaign in character education, and that's been on-going for three or four years, and possibly Dr. Giuliano can talk more about that later. We have introduced throughout the schools as well at each level there's a school resource police officer. I understand there are some issues with some of the police officers that come into this building, but I do need to tell you that the partnership we have with the police department have truly helped to bridge, if you like, the gap between the community and the high school. We have an officer here that has gotten to know students got to know them outside the school as well and are able to really feel a trusting or built a trusting relationship with them. So we found that has helped, and it has helped us deal with the police department and deal with the individual student problems whether it's a family issue that we're able to at least get the information about that student so we have a better idea what's going on in that individual's life.

We encourage, and over the last couple of years have had students plan, implement, organize Hispanic festivals, Hispanic celebrations. The black history month is very successful. In fact, that



started the whole routine, and other ethnic groups have asked for their time, if you like. And one of the things they are very encouraged by is the fact that they are able to expose to the rest of the community their culture, their heritage, their dances, their songs, etc., so that's been very successful amongst our school students.

We have many academic and extracurricular opportunities that students can choose and select courses of interest to them or also diverse extracurricular opportunities for them to also find some interests from dance club to on student government to drama clubs, to plays to -- I'm trying to think. A math club, whatever they feel, and in fact I think even in the ESL program Mrs. Middleton began a kind of advisory group with them as well so they have a source of expression, if you like, for some of their concerns.

We have established curriculum council through the curriculum council, and outside there's a social studies we've had this implemented in our old program. We hope to expand that throughout the system. Cultural awareness that should be part of our -- throughout our curriculum that we kind of tie into one another so that students are more exposed. Social

studies is a natural area for us to do that. We need to make sure English picks up with that, math picks up with that and it just becomes natural in our curriculum that we expose students to various cultural issues.

We are looking into expanding the ESL program. We have made a request to include ESL psychologist and ESL counselor or bilingual counselor, etc., devoted to ESL students. We certainly need to work in the area of diversity amongst our staff. There's been attempts through this district to go everywhere to look for, and I think they've gone to more conferences, they have gone down to the South I believe, and I'll leave that up to Mr. Giuliano to speak about, but I know there's been a real effort to try to get a diverse faculty population here. We still need to do some work in that.

My policy, and I think the administration's policy, whether or not we're always successful, is to have an open-door policy. I like having students walk in and out, and I would think if they were still here, many of them feel -- Carlos is often in my room. His brother John is often in my office. Macober often with Mr. Soucy, etc. We do have an open-door policy where they have an issue that I want to make sure they

feel comfortable coming to us, and I think most of us, as Mr. Desmaris will talk about, do follow an open-door policy. Are there issues out there? Are there individual teachers, individual classrooms? Absolutely. We're all human beings. It may have been a bad day. There's no excuse for that. We need to make sure there's students who feel the way Macober's expressed or other students have expressed have a channel of communication, have a way to express how they are feeling at that time, so if it's a counselor, if it's a student assistance program individual, if it's an administrator, if it's the school police officer, they need to feel that they are welcome to express the feelings without any repercussions.

Do we need to work in that area?

Absolutely, and I'm hoping the sensitivity training will at least expose teachers and other staff members to the experiences that our students have had, and that's an area that I'm very willing to work on and this administration has been very willing to support in that respect, and I think at this time I will finish by saying we have been looking at restructuring the high school, and one of the -- let me say two of the foundations, if you like, we want in this school, whether it's the 4,000 school that we're talking

about, or whatever the City of Nashua decides, is the fact that we want equity in our educational servicing, and we want to personalize. We have tried a pilot program called The Advisory Program by sophomores at this time. We're hoping that they have a real close liaison with a teacher, with an advisor.

We also have, as I mentioned earlier, this School Next To A School, which is a pilot program that began two years ago where they have a group of students who volunteered for that School Next To A School, and they are with a team of teachers. Our sophomore pilot school next year will again with team teaching, so students are assigned to a group of teachers that should be able to know these students and be able to plan and work out, if you like, individual education plans.

So we're moving in that direction. It's difficult to change overnight. As you know, education changes itself very slowly. But we know what we need to do, and I think we're on the right track. It took a little wake-up call here and there. And I'm going to turn over to Mr. Desmaris for the guidance services at this time.

MR. DESMARIS: Thank you. Not realizing that I was going to speak for 10 minutes, I just

wanted to just jot down a few ideas that came across my head. As you know, guidance is kind of a wide umbrella of services here at Nashua High School, as it is in most schools throughout the country. I just want to indicate to you a couple of things and certainly leave plenty of time for you at the end to ask questions because I think that's what I was prepared to do here today as well.

First of all, let me say I came here, first of all, to learn as much as to educate. I recognize that this forum has become a major milestone for us as a school, and it helps us in our form of transition. Let me say to you that I'm also coming today as the head counselor, which is a new position for me in the district being my first years as a counselor. I had been a counselor with the City of Nashua since 1981, however; also, I come to you as a soccer coach, not to recruit today, although that's always a possibility, but because that has a certain opportunity to that as well which I will allude to in a few minutes.

Like I said, there were various tidbits that I wanted to mention. First of all, our dealing with the immigrant student or non-English speaking student usually comes from day one anywhere -- it's a theme type of approach. We recognize in the guidance office

we're staffed by a 9-member team servicing 2,600 students. We work closely with Mr. Ankerberg and his staff and Susana Middleton. We've heard an awful lot -- a lot was said today, and we really haven't said enough to thank her for all her expertise in this area.

Basically the students and the counselors initially meet together to talk about the selection of courses and also to get a determination of their ESL assistants. One of the things that was brought up today indirectly has been the idea of special help. You see what's happened throughout the system is that there was a natural assumption when we had a student coming in that did not speak English, we automatically assumed that, obviously, there was a need for the ESL program, and that obviously if we could provide him or her with more additional English help, that eventually all the problems would take care of itself, and they would be functioning 100 percent.

One of the things that has come up is that the people are coming from various cultures also have certain strengths and weaknesses, and we're in the process now of identifying what those problems may be. So it's not just a matter of providing enough English services, but there might be indeed a hidden LD

problem or an ADD problem or something of that nature, and basically that's a realization that we're trying to get across to all our population because for many, many years we felt that a student -- there was a kind of a tag put on a student that had a tag put on a student that had some sort of LD problem, if you will, had an IAP or modern days we're talking about 504 plans, and basically there was a stigma attached to that if you had a certain tag attached to you. But, you know, we've progressed an awful lot as a nation. We recognize that both yourself and myself have certain strengths and weaknesses, and it's finally common knowledge today. And basically what our focus is is to increase or make due of the strengths, capitalize upon that, but also to try to minimize the weaknesses and work on that as well.

I know it's getting a little late, I don't want you to fall asleep. But basically that's certainly a transition. And as I said to you today is we have certain strengths about that at this point, but we also recognize that there are many, many challenges out there, and we need a forum such as this to work at this together because it's not just one person that's going to be able to solve anything.

The second thing that Miss Migneault

referred to was the fact that there are a variety of extracurricular activities available to the students, and as a soccer coach I can say in particular on a sports field, that's an ideal forum for many of our students. It's an ideal forum because of the fact it's kind of a relaxed atmosphere out there, except when I'm having them run laps. But it's kind of a relaxed atmosphere where we can kind of learn from each other. It's a good opportunity for students to start talking about their culture or to say why they were so worried about expressing themselves or to raise their hands or that type of thing that you normally associate in a classroom type of setting.

So I'll tell you that if you go to watch any one of your sports teams, you will see a variety of students out there and more importantly, the practice session is a great opportunity for us to express ideas and to grow together as a nation, and that's very important to us. I will say to you that there's also a challenge as well, and although we have a variety of extracurricular activities that Miss Migneault pointed to before, there's still a need for an awful lot more individual type things, so that way students can feel relaxed in their own culture and for them to create a support group within their own culture to recognize



that there's value to that, to be proud of the fact that they are Cambodian or Indian or whomever, that there's obviously a challenge to have more and more clubs along that line as well, in addition to encouraging these same students to go out and to share with other people within more traditional type clubs.

The next point I wanted to quickly address was post-secondary planning. All our students are listed here alphabetically and are assigned to particular counselors. We meet with these students on a regular basis. I will tell you that we have a challenge. We have a challenge presented to us as a school to increase the number of students going on to post-secondary education. That is a flat-out challenge issued to all of us here at Nashua High School. Last year in particular we sent on 49 percent of our students to a four-year college and 18 percent to a two-year college which gives us a total of 67 percent.

Miss Migneault also referred to the restructuring program. The restructuring program for many people is building of new buildings, increase the communication skills, increasing better plumbing, better airflow within the building and things like that, but in reality restructuring also is the fact

that we have a changing society here, and there's a need for us, no matter how large a school gets to be, is to get to the small learning environments, and that's our challenge to us right now.

In particular I had the privilege of visiting Lowell High School a couple weeks ago. They had entertained a similar challenge. And the similar challenge was to increase the number of students going on to school. They had the fortune of having -- of identifying certain groups within them. Apparently in Lowell there's a heavy Cambodian population there. They had the fortune of having some people in business or interested adults and from the Cambodian community, come in and speak to the school and now recognize it's not just a school situation -- obviously, there are sons and daughters too -- in kind of a joint effort. So, therefore, having Cambodian adults working alongside counselors to interest these Cambodian students, Cambodian-American students to pursue education and to look at possibilities in the future.

So they have had a number of these clubs, and I keep alluding to these individual clubs to kind of get their numbers up, so we're looking at the same type of thing. So for the first time I've been asked this year not only to issue a percentage of students

who are going on to four-year college and two-year college, but to further break that down to see if we can get a little bit more self-identity, if you will, and we're in the process of doing that at this time. We're in the process of collecting those types of statistics.

DR. FOURNIER: That's 30 minutes.

MR. DESMARIS: I just wanted to make a few comments. When I had the opportunity to address this panel earlier this year, I mentioned that Nashua is currently under an Office for Civil Rights complaints agreement, and I just wanted to sort of fill you in on what this process has been.

In September of 197 the district was notified that the Office For Civil Rights would be doing an on-site visitation, not as a result of a report of misconduct or civil rights violation but rather a periodic review. They did come, and I am very pleased to say that I felt that it was a very professional, a very cordial and positive experience, and I don't say that just because one of the team members from OCR is here.

The OCR investigative findings focused on our identification process and how we were assessing students, and were we assessing enough of the students

that we should have been assessing, which we were not, and we're trying to catch up with that now. They also focused on whether or not the district was providing an effective and equitable educational services for LEP and, quote, students and whether the district appropriately takes all of the flow and let students' home language and language proficiency into account when making referrals for 504 or special education.

We have since then adopted or are in the process of including as part of rewriting our plan a pre-referral process so that we can help avoid misidentifying students who really have a language and second language difficulty rather than special ed. Also, the district has been in the process of rewriting their 504 document and ESL referral or students from ESL referral or ESL program are now in that referral process so that we can hopefully avoid, again, as I say, misidentifying the students. I think that's all I need to say.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

MR. ANKERBERG: Just before we end, I just wanted to add here as far as our need because we are also working on five-year plans, and I think what you heard from students, and believe me I did not ask

these students to come up here and speak on my behalf, but smaller classes, more teachers, more social workers and definitely diversity training, and these are all issues which our OCR compliance review also indicated that we needed to do, and these are things that we are working on.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you.

MR. EPAPHRAS: From the students that Mrs. Ankerberg is helping the students to --

MR. ANKERBERG: My wife?

DR. FOURNIER: She's a teacher?

MR. ANKERBERG: We used to be in the program.

DR. BUFORD: My question is directed to Miss Migneault. Your testimony about what is available when students have a problem seems to be somewhat variant from the experience of Mr. Rowlett and son, and I want to know is there a real process for students who have difficulty with a teacher, with a counselor, with an administrator, with an assistant principal to principal? If you have one, is it a written process? Are students aware of it? Are parents aware of it because there seems to be a real mismatch here?

MS. MIGNEAULT: I will tell you what I know

at this level, and I would encourage a question Mr. Desmaris or Mr. Giuliano. if there's a problem with a teacher -- I guess you're looking at the latter authority. if there's a problem with a teacher, we encourage students to either talk with their counselor or administrator or even another teacher that they feel comfortable with who can then come to us. Some students do feel intimidated in complaining about a teacher. They feel there's going to be some repercussions. If they don't feel comfortable, at least talk to their parents who then will call us.

I've gotten several phone calls from parents about issues that we now deal with through the parents, a child come in to see me, and then we set up a meeting with the teacher or whatever process needs to be taken at that time, depending on what their resolution is, for what they would like to see as a resolution.

If there's a problem with me, I would hope they would go to the associate principal or the principal in the high school or even call any school board member. Call Mr. Giuliano. There are several options that parents can take. For a student, they could also go to their counselor. They could also talk to the teacher.

Every student and every parent through the student does have a student handbook and in that would look at different procedures for harassment. There's a harassment director, if you like, that any kind of written complaint or even verbal complaint can be made to the central office. So the handbook exposes them to a variety of channels that a student may take. Whether or not students know internally that this is a procedure to take, there's nothing that we hand out per say in the classroom situation where they would say this is the step you would take. They would have to go through their handbook to find out those procedures.

We encourage our students to refer to any adult, and that's why I'm saying when we have an open door, hopefully they'll find somebody to talk to. If I can use Macober as -- I'd feel more comfortable saying it if he was here, but I would think at this point he probably does feel comfortable going to his assistant principal. Even though that is a disciplinary as well, she seems to have developed a relationship with Macober that he feels comfortable going to her to express some concerns. I don't know if that was available to him in the past. And sometimes if a student doesn't feel they have anybody

that they feel comfortable with and they don't know where to turn and they allow it to continue, so we need to make sure that students do have access to individual adults that they feel they can respond to.

Do either one of you want to add to that? Does that answer your question at all? And, again, I'm sure Mr. Giuliano will talk more about that as well.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. We're running a little over.

MR. SERPA: First of all, being from Washington, I want some statistical background. The number of students overall here at Nashua High, what percentage are minorities and minority teachers on the staff and percentage of that?

MR. DESMARIS: I can address Nashua High School. Again, these figures are from central office which are the October 198 figures. There was a total of 2,551 students at Nashua High on October 1. Now you wanted ethnic majority?

MR. SERPA: Minority breakdown percentage wise.

MR. ANKERBERG: Well, Native American, .27 percent; Asian is 3.88 percent; Hispanic 7.72 percent. black 2.59 percent; and white 85.5 percent.



MR. SERPA: And teacher breakdown, minority teachers on staff?

MR. ANKERBERG: I don't know that.

MS. MIGNEAULT: I'm going to let two Hispanic professionals, two Hispanic teachers, and I would say that's probably about it at the high school.

MR. SERPA: So that leads to my next question about you were talking about diversity workshop and you're moving toward that direction. What does that mean? You have not held any?

MS. MIGNEAULT: We have held workshops through what we call staff development, but those are individual, you select them individually as to areas that you need to fulfill. We do have to fulfill character. So many staff member hours have to be devoted to that, and many of our workshops fall into that. What I'm saying we're moving to is a mandated diversity-sensitivity workshop, and our first one is scheduled for this month where we have I believe Brown University personnel coming up to begin introduction to that.

We're also meeting with community coalition, as I call them, on cultural issues, and they are meeting with us to also develop how the community can help us develop some programs where community

individuals come in to talk about local neighborhood experiences if you'd like, so we're dealing with that as well.

MR. SERPA: And what has been this impetus to start this as well?

MR. ANKERBERG: As far as Brown University's involvement, this has come about from our Office For Civil Rights compliance agreement, and so I have met with the education alliance at Brown. They will be providing training of various sorts. We are beginning, as Debbie said, the next area of release at the high school, but we're hoping to expand on this definitely for next year in other buildings as well because it is needed all the way from office staff and teachers and administrators and students.

MS. CHAPLAIN: Where's the budget coming from for this?

MR. ANKERBERG: Some of their services are free because they received federal grants to provide technical assistance to school districts, such as Nashua, with a minority population and diversity issues. We have written a Title 7 grant, which I don't know if we received it yet. I got a postcard with a number on it, and I haven't had a chance to find out. But in that grant we have also set aside

some of the funding to pay for extra services with Brown.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. Any other questions?

MR. SERPA: One quick question to Mr. Desmaris. We heard about coding from some students. I don't know if you have it now, but if you can provide also the breakdown of how many minority students are coded or if you know?

MR. DESMARIS: Offhand I would not know that.

MR. SERPA: But to compare it to the regular population?

MR. DESMARIS: I don't have that specific breakdown at this time.

MR. SERPA: Will you provide it to us?

MR. DESMARIS: I think it's something between 11, 13 percent of our total population is identified.

MR. ANKERBERG: And our ESL population is about 11 percent. Of just ESL, not the total float population.

DR. FOURNIER: So not just the today populations.

MR. STEWART: Excuse my ignorance, but are

504 services, does that by definition mean that the kids are coded for them?

MR. ANKERBERG: 504 is not a coding.

MR. DESMARIS: 504 was a bill that was signed into law in 1973. It basically came out and it covered the workplace initially, but basically what it was was that not all students need to be identified by the regular means as we have in the past. There are some other factors that sometimes influence the person's ability to function academically in the school setting. Sometimes it's a temporary type of thing. Sometimes there may be some other means.

MR. STEWART: So I noticed that in the LAU plan for the LAU letter from OCR, they pointed out that there was a bit excessive tie between 504 and LEP kids?

MR. ANKERBERG: Yes, what happened in the past is, and again this was often the result of just lack of resources that because we had so many lower functioning and non-English proficient and limited English proficient students that as they progressed up the level of proficiency, they were exited too soon. And as we find out incorrectly, the intent was to be able to provide additional service for them using some of our special ed people in the inclusion model, and

so we did 504s on them. This is incorrect.

MR. STEWART: I'd like to incorporate by reference the LCR letter and the school's response to it and the whole plan, and there are issues. Of course, they have problems with including the 504 LEP connection, but they also say LCR, again, commends the district for providing qualified, bilingual social worker, appearance and use the presence of this individual along with every member of the ESL department staff or department chairman I think we're speaking to would be a tremendous asset to the district, and I don't want to embarrass you by this, but I think there's some credit here to.

MR. DESMARIS: Well written, Mark.

DR. FOURNIER: I would like to point out a term that is not being used as it was in the class and that's limited English proficient, and now they tend to call them English language learners instead of having the negative term "limited."

Are there any other questions?

MS. TAYLOR: I have one. What are you doing to mainstream coded students? Are they being tested each year? And I'm asking this because I've experienced this particular thing before with my child, so I'm interested to know what you're doing?

MARK DESMARIS: Is your questioning pertaining to students at large rather?

MS. TAYLOR: Yes, at large. Well, basically minority students.

MR. DESMARIS: Basically, where this district has bought in fully into the inclusion program, which basically means that we will meet at least twice a year on every student at a minimum. sometimes we will meet more often than that in terms of, and by our staffing, in which case we will review what the current ideas and make modifications thereof and make changes accordingly, and it does change from one year and sometimes within the same year to the next staffing, and it sometimes makes a change. And, obviously, one of the impetus behind this is whenever we feel that students can become more independent and can go into a regular classroom or can take on more and more activities by him or herself, then we certainly encourage that to happen, so there is a striving to add as many assets and as many support systems as possible but also with the eye on that and saying, all right, when are we causing a problem by putting in a crutch when you don't need it?

MR. STEWART: Very quick question.

DR. FOURNIER: Go ahead.

MR. STEWART: I assume you maintain drop-out data. Do you have a minority break-up for it?

MR. DESMARIS: Mr. Giuliano will have that for you in a short while.

MR. STEWART: And the other question, was the LAU investigation pursuant to a complaint or was it just a random sampling?

MR. ANKERBERG: It's just a periodic review is what they've told us. I might introduce Elizabeth Brackton who is sitting in the back here from the Office For Civil Rights. You could probably comment on that.

ELIZABETH BRACKTON: Yes. It was definitely not the result of a complaint. We were starting to do some work in Northern New England, and the previous year we had worked in Manchester, so we were interested in going on to Nashua the next year.

DR. FOURNIER: Okay. Thank you very much to Nashua School Administrators for the panel.

I'd like to call on panel number 3, School District administrators, Dr. Giuliano, Nashua School District, and Evonne Dunn, Nashua School Board Members.

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Most of what I have to cover was covered very well by my colleagues, so I'm

going to try to jump around and hit some items that might not have been discussed or try to reinforce some of your questions and answers that were provided. Just to give you a little background, I've been in the district since 1978 as the assistant superintendent, more recently as a superintendent. The size of the school district, we have 13,345 students. As we said today, 16 schools, 12 elementary schools, 3 junior high schools and the high school. The minority population, and I'll give you this. They've been referring to it but I'll give you copies. It's about 14 percent, and it has all the breakdowns, and I think it addresses many of the questions that you were asking Mark Ankerberg.

We have seen a change in the city population over the years. Since I've been here we've seen the enrollment grow by thousands of students, and the minority population has grown as well. As Mark mentioned, the Office of Civil Rights came in, and they did a compliance report and we can provide, but apparently you must have it. I think you referenced it, and I would acknowledge the comment that you made that Mark Ankerberg and the ESL people have done a marvelous job with the resources that they had, and I think the students were a real testament to



the program.

Relative to the coded population, the total school district has 13 percent of their population coded, and I can give you the breakdown -- I don't have all the information here today, but we have all that broken out by school, by level and it's readily available to you. And the high school is a little below the 13. I think it's right about 12 percent coded population. We are a national demonstration site. We were the first one in New Hampshire for inclusive education so youngsters are mainstreamed. That is the primary way the coded population is educated in Nashua. There are very few self-contained classrooms. As a matter of fact, about seven years ago we had 100 students placed in our district. That number is down to about 38 students, so we really are trying to bring youngsters back to the mainstream.

Relative to the process on a complaint, a year ago with the assistance with the Office of Civil Rights, we have revised and since approved all of our policies relative to harassment and discrimination. And as Debbie Migneault mentioned, all of those policies are recorded in the handbooks. Every student in this school district from grade kindergarten up to grade 12 receives a copy of that handbook, and we ask

that either the parents and the student sign off so they understand the process that a youngster is to go through if there's a complaint.

Obviously, students do not want to complain about or a parent doesn't want to complain about a teacher for fear of retaliation. You hear that quite often. Anonymity is built in so they can make the complaint to our office. We have a hearing officer that does nothing but deal with these issues, and parents do make themselves available in that avenue.

Some of the things that we have done in way of reaching out to the minority population is we now translate, and I wish Susana was here, but we now translate all important documents in several different languages and then distribute it to the homes. Our handbooks are done in different languages that go out to the parents.

Someone raised a question about how did the minority population be acclimated in the school district. At the kindergarten level where most of them come in, we now have during a kindergarten registration process translators available. We have been going to certain schools in the district, and they are able to communicate in another language with the people registering them. We have several social

workers beginning in kindergarten all the way up at the high school that was addressed in the compliance report. This has been a major goal of the Nashua School District now for the past 10 years. We have actively recruited minorities.

I'm not going to say we've been very successful, but we have gone all over New England at recruitment conferences advertising for minorities. The last few years we've picked up four or five throughout the school system, and we can provide you the breakdown -- I don't have that with me today -- how many minorities we have in a district. We want more minorities to be working in the community. As the community changes, we feel we need those sorts of people to work with our students and parents. There is a Mayor Ethnic Awareness Committee. I believe it was mentioned earlier. our director of human resources serves on that committee, as well as a few other people that you heard from today. We have addressed meetings on with that group and work very closely with them.

As a result of the office of Civil Rights, we now have a Spanish speaking person in every one of our 16 schools, whether it be a teacher or a clerical person or a parent professional, so people can

interface in a different language.

Earlier it was mentioned about respect, the lack of respect. We survey our student population every year beginning in grade K all the way up to grade 12, and to my amazement we come out pretty good when you look at those results from the students. They really like their experience in the Nashua School Districts. The thing that jumps out starting in the lower grades right to the high school is students feel there's a disrespect amongst themselves for each other. That's a major goal that we're going to have to address as a school district, and I think it's something that's going on nationally based on what we're reading in the papers.

Another thing that we've done for the minority population is for the summer school, we traditionally do not provide transportation for youngsters for summer school. That's a parent's responsibility. It's provided free to the minority population to get them to the program, and Mark was telling me earlier that that has had a real impact. We have about 40 or 50 students that --

Some of the efforts that we're continuing to work on, we're averaging out trying to bring a consultant. Brown University that Mark mentioned is

working with us. Diversity training, we started diversity training going back 10 years ago. It's not recent. 10 years ago we started it. It was an issue that we started to address when we saw the complexion of the community changing back then and we have other programs scheduled. As a matter of fact, on August 13, this summer, all 50 administrators will be going through some sort of diversity training that we're working out with one of our universities. But we have to get beyond the administrators. We've got to get down to teachers. We've got to get down to students. We have to get down to the parents and pull all of those groups into the training that we're trying to achieve. And one of the things that we're doing to achieve that, and I give this person the credit, Mrs. Dunn who is on our Board of Education, over the last four or five years we have the most comprehensive reform effort in this state and probably in New England when it comes to curriculum development. We have spent millions of dollars in this effort, and one of the items that our committees are charged with incorporating into those new curriculums is cultural awareness. We are trying to infuse the system so that students understand different cultures.

Character education, we've had that for the

past five years, and it's mainly at the elementary level, and it gets into a great deal to deal with diversity training. It has been extremely successful. We've used that program initially in some schools that we've had some problems with students among students, and we've seen a dramatic change in how students interact with each other based on that program. It's been very successful.

We continue to hire minorities or look to have minorities come into district. And another major change, and it was alluded to and I just want to elaborate on just a little and that is we have to break down schools into smaller communities. This school is very large. Every school in the Nashua School District is large. Our intent is to break students off into community of 100 students as if they are a family, and that initiative is happening throughout the system. You call it middle schools, team teaching and at this level we're calling it academies, and we're going through a major change, and that's been getting in September here at the high school.

As a large city school district, schools continue to have our successes and we have our problems. Hopefully our successes outweigh our

problems, but clearly we know we have to do more in this area. We feel we're doing some good things, but to reach the community and the students and the faculty, more and more is going to have to be done in this area. I'm going to stop there. Would you like to ask me questions now?

DR. FOURNIER: Are there any questions?

MS. CHAPLAIN: I asked the question before and the funding -- you're getting some of these resources from via federal funding is free. What happens if that kind of funding dries up? Are you planning to budget it?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Yes. I'm glad you raised that. We have about an \$80 million budget that we operate on. What we've been doing over the last couple of years is we've been adding more ESL teachers. We added two this year plus five ---- professionals, and we're dealing with 360 students. The Budget Board has already approved two more for next year, and in this year's budget \$25,000 was set aside for ESL materials and disbursed throughout the curriculum funds, and this year is about \$1 million, is money built in for materials. So even if we don't get the grants, we're going to have money to support the program.

REVEREND PERKINS: Before you pass that on, there is an alternative learning program, and I have not heard that been addressed at all during this session. Can you talk a little bit about that, and how does that reflect the minority population on the school?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: I don't have those statistics. In the alternative program here at the high school, we have about 80 students. I suspect -- and I'm not sure. You can get that, but there are very few minorities in there based on just me going through the program and meeting with some of the students. Tied into that, in September the Board has approved an alternative middle school that will probably be housed off-site that will deal with 100 to 120 students, and what we've been doing is working with various community groups and the police department, youth service groups as well as our own educators to identify who those 100 students might be.

REVEREND PERKINS: -- those students those plan to reach?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Yes, at the middle school level.

REVEREND PERKINS: Do you think that the alternative learning program, would that help



eliminate some of the drop-outs of students in the school?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: I don't have to say this publicly, but we had a very high drop-out rate until a few years ago. It was about 7 percent, as a result -- and we give that alternative school credit -- it's dropped to 3.2 percent.

REVEREND PERKINS: Do you think the program will work better perhaps if you had the alternative learning program outside the school facility?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: What we're advocating now as a teacher of a program, it would. But the funding is an issue now. When we move into -- we're going to have to move off-site with the middle school program because we don't have any space anywhere, and we're looking at a particular building in the community which may be able to house one program, but I would agree it should be off-site.

DR. FOURNIER: Yes, ma'am.

DR. HOULIHAN: Six and a half years ago I founded an alternative school when I relocated, with nine years here in New Hampshire, to Connecticut, but I found my biggest problem was and still is because I since relocated to Laconia is instead of looking at my alternative school as an additional resource to the

community, they tend to see it as an outsider, and that's where I think the education should be, an alternative has run independently all through the school stem. Both should be, quote, looked in the same way because if one is looking at me, quote, as making money from an alternative school, that is a myth. Trust me.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you. Any other questions?

DR. METOYER: What are some of the languages that have been used in the translation of the important documents?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Spanish --

MR. ANKERBERG: The primary home language survey is actually Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, French, Portuguese. We have free and reduced lunch forms in Spanish and Portuguese and Vietnamese, Khmer, or Lao. I can't remember which. We don't do so much anymore.

DR. FOURNIER: Any other questions?

AUDIENCE: Dr. Giuliano, you said over the last two years that you recruited four to five minorities I believe to your teaching staff; is that correct?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: That's correct.

AUDIENCE: Do you have a breakdown of what those minorities were or what nationality they were?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: I don't have that information with me today, but I could get that for the Committee.

REVEREND PERKINS: One other thing, the ethnic totals for the Nashua School District, the North American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, black, white and then the total; however, looking at a -- I don't have it here, but it was probably at another meeting -- there's another breakdown that the Adult Learning Center has that's reflected by, and I guess it's more ethnic groups because their total -- at the Ethnic Awareness Committee we found there to be 40 something different groups. For instance, the Portuguese community in the Adult Learning Center had some 40 something numbers of people attending it. I would think if you got that many adults going to the Adult Learning Center, and I realize that some of them could be teenagers. I just want to know how that is incorporated into this because when you look at this, this does not --

JOSEPH GIULIANO: That isn't.

REVEREND PERKINS: It isn't at all?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: That is strictly the day

students, the 13,345 so of the day students.

REVEREND PERKINS: Will there be people missing from this? It would appear to me it would be?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Well, students that go to the Adult Learning Center?

REVEREND PERKINS: Not just that go to the Adult Learning Center, but I don't know how they are reflected in this.

MR. ANKERBERG: Reverend Perkins, part of the confusion in the ethnic totals for the school district is that you have a certain population, and we talked earlier about language and race. The Portuguese, Brazilian students, for example, do not consider themselves Hispanic, so they probably are coded under white here. We have the same problem when you have a black and Hispanic, they are not sure where, but I think that Mr. Giuliano can speak to this that they are doing a new student data system, and I think we're going to probably be a little clearer on how we identify. I have asked for, at least from my department, that as part of that student data that one of the categories be primary home language other than English, what the language is and whether or not that student is ESL.

REVEREND PERKINS: That's an area of concern

then because that's a large number?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Yes.

REVEREND PERKINS: And I know that's one of the things that we're trying to help with at the Ethnic Awareness Committee so we can better identify people and needs and how we reflect our community but thank you.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. We have to move on to the School Board Member right now. Maybe there will be time for questions afterwards.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER: I'll be as quick as I can so you have an opportunity. First of all, as a School Board Member and as a member of the school in Nashua, I would like to thank you for this opportunity. I didn't know what was going to actually occur today, and the dialogue for me as a board member as well as a citizen has been very informative and very helpful.

A number of the things I've heard today expressed by the students and parents are some of the first times I've heard -- I don't know these parents and did not know these students, and I will say to you as an individual board member and on behalf of my board members, it is the intent of the Nashua School System not to discriminate.

And I will say a little something to you of my own background so that you can understand how I did relate to the students today. My father is from Spain. My mother is from Vienna, Austria. They were immigrants. I am the first born in the United States. My sister was born in London. The struggle that they had in adjusting to the United States I lived every day of my life. When these students were talking about adjustment and some of the difficulties that they had, I understand them. And I know and the young lady -- and I'm very proud of you and each of you when you spoke because I think in our society and especially in the United States, we value the differences in culture, and we must respect each other's differences and the City of Nashua, as in other cities in this country, but I think here we have had a change in the make-up of our city, and I think that it is challenging all of us to become better people, to become better listeners, to become more understanding and to celebrate cultural diversity. You said that you are trying to strive to the best of your ability to continue to learn, to continue to learn the English language and to succeed, and that from the Board of Education's point of view for every child is what we want to occur.

Every one of the Board of Education's goals is that in every school in the Nashua system we need to create an engaging, motivating and caring learning environment that enables every student to achieve at their maximum ability and that we support them and that we do whatever we can.

In the process, as a Board Member I chair the High School Building Committee, and what some of the students had communicated today are some of the things that we hear throughout when we go, and that is we need to develop a more caring, respectful environment. This is regardless if we're a minority student or not. We must create that. And part of that is a definite change of attitude and a change of the existing culture within our building, and it's a change that we need to make heart by heart. And what you've heard today is that we have a lot of work ahead of us, but the fact of the matter is we have individuals and dedicated people that know that we must, we must cause change, and we're going to have to do it heart by heart, and it is not an easy process. And the fact that some of the students have had, you know, negative experiences, believe me, that is not what we want to have here. And we must correct it and change it and make every person in every building

accountable to make the change and to work at it and it takes time, but I think it is not an excuse not to change.

From a Board of Education perspective, I also learned today that as a parent you did not come to the Board of Education. It is critically important for any student and any parent in the City of Nashua to understand that as Board of Education members we are elected officials. We are public servants, which means, and I take very seriously, that I am here and available for you. If you go through the process where you go through the channel here, which we respect because this is the outline, you start with your teacher. If there's a problem with the teacher, you go to the teacher. If there's a problem, you go to the guidance, you go to the principal, you go to the school administration. If you have not been satisfied with the response, you must feel free to come to the Board of Education. That is part of our responsibilities as a Board, and we are there to be available and to hear and to follow-up and to do our part related to any issues. So that is something that I wanted all of you to understand because that is part of our responsibilities and it's critical.

Now in getting back, we also have a Board



Student Relations Committee that I had the pleasure of chairing this year, and it started out in the Board of Education's policy that it was just four student representatives. I am one that feels very strongly you need to wind it up and get as many of them that want to be there, there, and so we have opened it up to every organization, every class officer, anyone who is interested because we need the diversity. We do have a number that come. They bring up the issues and their concerns in policy related areas. In fact, this year in regard to tobacco and problems related to smoking and things going on in the building, the students, in fact, were very involved in change of the district policy. And they definitely had their door right in there for communication. That particular committee continues to evolve and needs to have more ethnic diversity on it because we need to get a variety of students involved. The door is always open, but they need to take the time to come. We meet at 7 o'clock in the morning. 7 o'clock in the morning. We provide breakfast. We have breakfast there, but they need to get there and come because if you don't share and become part and discuss and take the opportunity to work with us, then we don't know and we can't respond, so it's one of those areas of

communication we can all do better and we know and from the Board's point of view this is a mechanism.

There's one other comment that I would like to make, and I know we're trying to close, but I want you to be aware as far as what we can do in assessing our students that have different languages and come in, I have had a concern that when we assess them, as one of the students that indicated, she took an assessment in English related to her knowledge regarding the curriculum. Again, being raised in the background that I have, I do understand that when you're learning another language and you have been educated in another country, if you take a test in the language that you're not proficient in, it does not always articulate the level of your knowledge, and my concern is that we need to do a better job when we assess the students in finding out exactly their knowledge base in their language initially. We must know what they know so that we not only teach them English, but we can continue to move forward so that they never ever think that they are stupid because they have gained knowledge in their country. We need to understand how much they have learned and then take them from that point and move forward. An example that we could do in this school that I think would be

very helpful is, for instance, we teach Spanish in our Spanish classes. We have ESL students learning English. Ah, an idea: Have the ESL students help our Spanish students learn the language, have our Spanish students help our English students learn English. Share together working together and have common celebrations of the different cultural things that we can learn from them, as well as music is a wonderful area where students connect, and I think we need to do more ways of celebrating, and I hope that we will do more.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much. I think that if we do not break, we're going to miss our lunch.

REVEREND PERKINS: Just one question. Is there a calendar of ethnic groups or celebrations and that type of thing in the school?

JOSEPH GIULIANO: Each school has something that they develop, but we don't have anything district wide.

MR. SERPA: I just want to make an announcement for the people who signed up to give a presentation, Marvin Burnett, Haley Mills, Dr. Houlihan. If you can hold on until right after we get back from lunch, we'll take you right at the beginning

and you can make your presentations. Thank you.

DR. FOURNIER: Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, at 12:54 p.m., a

luncheon recess was taken.)

## A F T E R N O O N S E S S I O N

(1:47 P.M.)

MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name for those who were not here this morning is Patricia Taylor. I am a business person in my private life, and I'm acting as chairperson today. I am not the chairperson but I am acting as such. Today the focus of our briefing meeting is to collect data and information and to determine a more in-depth inquiry into these issues which are based on the briefing statements that will be made.

The briefing has been broken up into two sessions, the morning session consisted of equal educational opportunities in public schools, very well given this morning, and this afternoon's session will be police and community relations.

I'd like to give a little bit more detail on the briefing. This briefing is designed to provide an opportunity for all concerned to identify problems and express concerns and for public officials to respond. We hope to spread the word to other New Hampshire communities that civil rights problems deserve serious attention and remedial efforts by state officials and the public by holding the projected series of community briefings and later issuing our reports, the

committee hopes to contribute valuable information to the public for use of their advocacy efforts to improve the lives of the people in New Hampshire.

After saying that, I will turn this over to Fernando.

MR. SERPA: Thank you, and welcome to the new people, and welcome back to the people that were here this morning. We will be continuing with the afternoon session which consists of police-community relations. But first there were three people on our list who had signed up to brief the panel on educational issues that we were not able to get to, and I'd like to call them right now. In case those who do not know who I am, I am Fernando Serpa with The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in Washington, D.C. and the liaison to the New Hampshire Committee here, and the purpose, as Pat said, is to gather information on civil rights issues in this community, and we will be traveling to other communities around the state, Manchester, Portsmouth and up north, to gather an overall picture of what the civil rights situation is in New Hampshire, and that will be compiled into a report which will go to the National Commission, to the congressional offices, to the state and local officials here, and hopefully effect a change in the

community. So I'm saying we need to hear from three community members right now who would like to speak on the issue of education. The first is Marvin Burnett.

MARVIN BURNETT: My name is Marvin Burnett, ethnic background is Native American. I come from the Dakota Sioux, The Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. I lived here in Nashua, New Hampshire for the last 14 years. Cumulative I've lived here a total of 20 years. There's some issues I would like to address concerning the comments of civil rights, and I hope to explain how this ties into the education system of which I was here through the morning session.

To give you a little bit of quick background about myself, this will give you an idea where I'm coming from over the issue of which I hope to explain. Being Native American, I'm very involved in Native American affairs not only here in the City of Nashua but the State of New Hampshire, New England, the United States, North American continent and worldwide issues. I've been active as a Native American. I've performed in three or four different movies. I've been on two or three different national TV series. I've appeared on the NBC Good Morning America show, I'm a retired military veteran, 21 years active federal service that concluded in retirement in 1985

at which time I moved to Nashua and began my second career here in the State of New Hampshire. In the education system I am accredited and associated with The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, The New England Foundation on the Arts, The National and International Foundation on the Arts. I have completed several tours of education throughout the United States and in foreign countries. I was one of 30 native Americans selected to represent the United States in 1992 at the World Arts festival in Martinique, France; a very bestowed honor that was given to me.

Having lived here in Nashua for the last years, one issue that occurred a couple of years ago that I would like to address in the area of civil rights: On December 22, 1996, one of the key administrators, town officials of City Hall retired from public duty, public service here in the City of Nashua relocating to the State of Florida. The City Hall administrators, the Mayor, Board of Alderman, several Alderman members themselves, invited friends and other politicians attended that party. Now what this party entailed was a social event, a going away party, but for whatever reason, they determined to name the theme of this going away party a powwow,



which is associated with Native American people. The word "powwow" means the gathering of elders, the gathering of the people. During the course of this social event, they found it necessary to tape up the windows so nobody could see inside. What occurred on the inside was some of the elected public officials, appointed officials and friends parading around in mock and make-believe Native American outfit.

Now as Native American myself, this is very very serious to us. It raises many concerns. We're against a step on the threshold of prejudice, racism, discrimination, bias against Native American people in the community. What they did was they had little toy tom-toms which we as native people, we don't call our drums tom-toms. They had mock feathers cut out of paper, many of them wearing on their person to represent Native Americans. The theme of this was a chief retiring, the administrator going to Florida who found it necessary to wear these feathers. Feathers, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee, is very important to me. I hold several honor feathers. These honor feathers are Native American culture. I told you I'm a veteran of 21 years active service. The two feathers that I wear are honor feathers. I don't receive these feathers because I'm Native

American. They were bestowed upon me by my tribal council of Rosebud, South Dakota. On these feathers there's a round dot that indicates I gave my blood for the service of my country. I was wounded in battle. on the second feather there's another red dot. That means I took the life of the enemy. In our culture, in my tradition, that represents I own the spirit of my enemy until I die. That's what the eagle feather represents to me, but yet these elected officials, appointed officials, friends and family, the Mayor, President Board of Alderman, Members of the Board of Alderman, they chose to wear these mock feathers, therefore, mocking the culture of which I am so proud of. They could have chosen other scenarios. They could have worn serapes and sombreros, but no, because the Hispanic community would be up in arms. I don't blame them. They could have worn brown shirts with swastikas on them, but they didn't because the Jewish community would have been up in arms, and I wouldn't have blamed them. They could have appeared in black face, but they didn't because the Afro American would have been up in arms. They could have appeared in dragon costume, waiving chopsticks, but they didn't because the oriental community would have been up in arms.

This morning we heard a great deal of percentages here, percentages there. In the State of New Hampshire for 1990, less than one percent are Native American people. This is why the Native American culture was selected as a theme for this going away party. Well, it didn't stop, Ladies and Gentlemen. There pasted banners and posters on the wall, the windows and so on with personal notes on it. And on some of those notes, if many of you will recall two and a half years ago the True Value jet plane that crashed in the Everglades in what I refer to as Seminole Country in the national parks of the Everglades, there were no survivors. Survivors were not found. Probably because of the wildlife habitat of the Everglades. There was comments to that effect of the retiring administrator. If you go to Florida, do not attempt to land in the Everglades. There is not an approved FAA in the Everglades. That is very disgraceful to the family and friends of the victims of that True Value jet crash.

Some comments were made about Native American culture, and perhaps for income revenue is to put a casino on the roof of City Hall, again referring to Native American people. Because of the success of the Mashentucket Pequots in Connecticut, apparently

some city officials think that every Indian should be rich. We're not. Where I come from, Ladies and Gentlemen, many of the homes still don't have flush toilets, many of the homes still don't have electric lights, but yet we have city officials doing these acts of prejudice, bias, discrimination. That's why I'm here today, civil rights, my civil rights.

The civil rights -- being aware of the discrimination, the bias and the prejudices that occur within the City of Nashua, myself for the last 12 years, I have been involved in the education awareness of Native American people through non-profit organizations, corporate industry, big business industry. I've acted on the Affirmative Action Plan of the United States Government on the state level, federal level. I'm on the Native American Advisory Committee of Native American students at Dartmouth College in Hanover. I'm on the Native American Advisory Committee for the Native American students at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and I'm also on the Native American Advisory Committee for the Native American students at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut; along with I do a particular amount of lecturing, education awareness at other major universities and colleges throughout the United

States, throughout New England. I try to reach in a good way on educational awareness.

And the purpose of this education awareness, it's not to display a fact that I am better than anybody. I am not. It's not to display that anybody is any better than I. They are not. In my culture and my heritage, we all live within a circle. We all have a reason for that circle. We are all people, and that's what I try to promote when I go into the educational facilities and the kindergarten, elementary school, high school, college level, corporate business and so on, education awareness of Native American people. And having been selected for the many things that I have accomplished and things that I have done, the things that I continue to do especially when I get requests for repeat performances, I'm comfortable in the fact of stating that I must be doing a good reason of being a good exercise with the education. Any level, from kindergarten to the college level, I try to eliminate that prejudice, biases and discrimination. What we discussed this morning in the education system right here at Nashua High School, I think one of the questions this morning by one of the panel members there was at what level of education does racism exist

at Nashua High School?

Well, my answer is it begins at City Hall and it goes down. And that's the point that I want to make here. Regardless of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, financial background, religion or ethnic measures that in this day and age we shouldn't have to face this. But since December 22, 1996, I've been trying to address this issue with the City of Nashua, the Mayor of Nashua, the President of the Board of Alderman and the Board of Alderman themselves. I might add that on occasion the couple of Board of Alderman who did not attend that party, they did personally apologize; however, they did not attend that going away social party, but they acknowledged my concerns.

I have requested no less than 22 to 24 times that public appearance for the City of Nashua, the Mayor of Nashua for a public apology not only to myself as Native American but all ethnic people of Nashua and especially the friends and family of those victims of the True Value plane crash. Marvin Burnett.

MS. TAYLOR: May I interject here? We are asking each speaker to keep your comments down to 5 to 10 minutes. Okay? Thank you.

MS. SANDERS: I'll keep it brief. My name is Tammy Sanders. I am Native American also. I am of a different nation than Marvin. I am of the Cree, Mic Mac and Malisee nations mostly found in Canada. As a native woman it's almost symbolic that we had all the distortion. As native people, that's a pretty common occurrence for our lives. As we try to speak, we're very rarely heard. As he says I support that -- I work for the city myself, that it would be important that when it's brought to your attention about something to re-educate or something may have done out of ignorance or not meaning to do so, that if someone tries to tell you something different that you learn from it. And our cultures as we've spoken of a circle is very important, giving and receiving and moving on is the important piece, and we cannot move on from these issues when a person who is a representative, who is a head person, refuses to acknowledge and give to us what we're trying to give to him. so we feel it would be an important step for him to at least acknowledge this difficulty and to set a precedent for the city as well in responding to each other as community. Thank you.

MR. KETCHEN: My name is Arthur W. Ketchen, and while I am not Native American, my wife is Native

American and also I sat on the Ethnic Awareness Committee when I and Ronnie Carlsberg found out about this so-called party that was being held back two years ago. I have been with Marvin when he has spoke to the Alderman about addressing this issue. I have drawn up -- which I gave to Marvin today. We have drawn up a resolution which we have asked the Alderman repeatedly to vote on a resolution of apology to all people and the people that they insulted that evening.

The point I would make about this is that this goes on at City Hall on city time. It needs more than just a couple of individuals apologizing. This was a deed done corporately and went as a politician. You do something on the corporate level for somebody that's leaving of ices as a city official, and you insult part of the tax paying public. That part of the tax paying public deserves an apology. This party they knew was wrong. They took and blocked up the windows. It was only because a correspondent from The Telegraph walked in upon them that they got caught.

The other thing that happened here, furthermore, was that the Mayor had had a long-standing campaign of trying to take and how would you say -- be apologetic for some of the overtly racist remarks some radio commentators had made like,



for example, one of them had said there had never been any ethnic cleansing in America and proceeded to mock Native Americans.

When a government official deliberately takes and attempts to take and make excuses and then attacks the group that's been so insulted, he has in spirit, if not statutorily, violated his office and violated his obligation to the people of the city something more than just a single apology. The Board of Alderman and the Mayor need to get right in the spirit and the sense with the Constitution. Marvin has a copy of that resolution. We can give that to you. I would like to talk with the Members of this Board and certainly Marvin about what can be done here.

I think that this issue needs to be addressed, a formal apology and resolution. This apology needs to be voted on and passed by the Board of Alderman so we can get beyond this and put an end to this sorry period in Nashua's history. Thank you.

MR. SERPA: Let me just interject at least for the record that the Mayor and his aides were invited to this meeting, and I don't think they have showed up for that. Thank you.

MR. STEWART: Ms. Sanders, you work for the

city. In what capacity?

MS. SANDERS: Maybe not for long now.

MR. STEWART: Let us know.

MS. SANDERS: I will. Thank you. I work in a children's clinic, Community Services Division. Public Health.

MR. STEWART: Do you deal with a multi-cultural clientele?

MS. SANDERS: Yes. Half of our clientele are minorities. Actually 53 percent was the last percentage.

MR. STEWART: Can we assume then that you were given leave time to come to this meeting?

MS. SANDERS: Well, I was -- we were given leave time as a personal day. It was something we had to take on our own to do so. It was not something -- we're not here representing the City or Public Health per say. I also did not get an opportunity to talk to people who are much higher up than some of my immediate personnel, so they may not be actually too aware of how much this means, but the immediate ones didn't see the relevance.

MR. STEWART: Thanks for coming.

MR. SERPA: Thank you.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Do you know if anyone from

the police department was present for that party?

AUDIENCE: I'm not aware that the police department was aware of that party of December 22, 1996.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Thank you.

MR. SERPA: Any other requests? Thank you. I'd like to call Haley Martin. Dr. Ruby Houlihan.

DR. HOULIHAN: I am Dr. Ruby Houlihan, address of residence is Gilford, New Hampshire. My Alternative School is located in Laconia.

MR. HOULIHAN: I'm Mr. Houlihan. This is enough. I'm retired, but I'm an algebra, math teacher in my wife's school.

DR. HOULIHAN: I thank you today for giving me this opportunity, and especially Marie for inviting me and being a very dear friend to me. I also attend the Culturally Diversity Task Force Group which meets monthly as well, and that's been very much a support for me. But more than anything else today, what I am looking for indeed is support. it all started for me, as I said, I did relocate to New Hampshire 9 years ago from the State of Connecticut. And if you know anything about the state of Connecticut, it is at the top when it comes to education and also the diversity of people. So I had not anticipated many of the

problems I have relocating to New Hampshire as I have experienced since I've been here. it all started for me six and a half years ago out seeking a position, and I come here with six certification, mind you, administrator, principal, of course is also administration, a special ed teacher grade 1st through 12, social studies teacher 7 through 12, adult education and what have you, and I taught in the Bridgeport School System for over 15 years, and I was with the Department of Correction in Cheshire for a number of years before relocating, but I think what was the culture shock to me was going out seeking a position, and on some occasion being told that the application was lost and other occasions not getting a return call, acknowledgment of any sort. So I decided at that time because I was offered two positions, so I do want to be very honest here: One was at a Department of Corrections in Concord which was at that time about an hour and a half to two-hour drive from Littleton, and the other position that was offered to me was at Pembroke Academy, and that was about 2 hour and 15 minutes.

In the meantime, all of the other surrounding towns I did not get an acknowledgment, so I decided, darn it, if no one else thinks I'm good

enough to be hired, I'll hire myself, and that's how my alternative school precipitated.

But it wasn't just enough having the alternative school precipitate because I had many roadblocks, and the roadblocks were the lack of support. They did not want to support a black woman in my position and send students to me, but I was sort of fortunate though with one special ed director in Littleton, and I really do want to give her a lot of credit here. Her name is Celia Tier, and she sent me my very first student. It was only after she left when I started having problems with the next special ed director, Kevin Akerman, and that sort of followed me when I relocated here to Laconia, and I've had sort of one problem after another one, including trying to shut my doors down on one occasion, but at that time both parents, both of my parents were in full support of me, and they called and detested to keep their student in the school, so that's how I was able to keep my students.

So this is basically where I am. I need support, and I also at the same time need to make aware that there's a big issue, race problem here in New Hampshire, and many people don't want to acknowledge it, but it's very blatant, it's very open

and it's very apparent. And that's basically what I would like to share with most of you today.

MR. HOULIHAN: I don't think I need this. I think you can hear me. I'm going to go back to Littleton where we first were. This is an example. This probably drove the final nail in and we left. We didn't get a check for November for tuition from -- I think it was SAU 29, from the school district. My wife called up. It was around one week later. I'd say around the 5th or the 7th. And they say, "We're not going to send you the check. You owe us some money." So my wife says to me, "We owe them some money." This is why I'm telling you this story anyway because I have more to do with it, so I went up to the office, and here was what I got for the story. The number was \$583. Now that's a pretty good sum of money because you're never going to get rich with a little alternative school, so we lived from month to month. The excuse I got was one of our students placed here by the district in our school -- I forget his last name. His first name was Wayne.

DR. HOULIHAN: We're not supposed to give the last name anyway.

MR. HOULIHAN: Okay. He had come to us from Woodsville which is in New Hampshire. They said he

had moved to Vermont, so they did not owe us the money. I says, "Wait a minute." I said, "We didn't place him here. You did. That's your responsibility where he lives."

You don't get your check unless you give us \$583. And that's the way it was. They got \$583. We got a receipt for it though. He got a nice Christmas present for himself. We're talking about December. That's the public school system, don't forget.

DR. HOULIHAN: The story could go on, but we know time is limited, and we want to try and be as detailed as we can without going into a whole story, but I do have documentations of the problems that have been going on in the Laconia area, and I did hear you say that you will be making trips, and I would like to invite you to Laconia, and I'll have a special session there with you with some of the people that is giving me trouble at this time.

MR. SERPA: Okay. I'll take you up on that. Thank you.

DR. HOULIHAN: And I did pass a card around, so I hope you take one. I thank you. We thank you.

MR. HOULIHAN: We thank you for your time. Right.

MR. SERPA: Now we can move to the afternoon

session which is on police-community relations. Our moderator for that session will be Reverend Bertha Perkins of the Committee and again I want to remind everyone to try to limit your remarks to 5 to 10 minutes so we can have enough time for questions afterwards and get everyone else who wants to speak a chance to speak also. Reverend Perkins.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you. I will move swiftly. A brief introduction of myself is I'm Reverend Bertha Perkins, Pastor of the Culture Baptist Church located on 50 Ash Street, Nashua, New Hampshire, and as part of the community outreach, we have several partnerships with different communities within the community. I also happen to Chair the Ethnic Awareness Committee for the City of Nashua at this time. I previously worked at a major corporation, IBM to be specific, for about 21 years. I took a buyout so that I could do this type of work, be more devoted to church work and community outreach. I was brought up in the City of Manchester, moved to Nashua in 1991 and lived in New Hampshire now for 39 years, so I'm dating myself. I graduated Central High School, so I am very much New England and have awareness of things that happen in the community. Enough about me, and I will introduce to you our first



panel. Incidentally, I worked on the Advisory Committee for over 10 years.

Our first panel will be a panel of community representatives, and as I call your name, I ask that you please come and take the seats, which has already been done. Our first person is Linda Gathright who is the former chair of the outreach for Black Unity. She is a business woman, worked for Bell Atlantic for a number of years, has been actively involved in the community for a number of years and I believe a resident of Nashua for the past 20 years. Is Pastor Hebert Betancourt from the Pentecostal Ministry Church here? Wonderful. And then community members that were invited, if there's anyone who would like to sit with the other two representatives, please do. And if you will share with us your name so we may write that down?

MS. HOLMES: My name is Gloria Holmes and I'm going to represent myself. I'm not going to represent my organization. It's just Gloria Holmes as individual and resident of Manchester. However, I'm present because I have a story that I would like to share with the residents of Nashua since that occurred to me personally in Nashua, New Hampshire.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much,

Gloria. On a personal note, it's good to see you. I've been looking for you for about a little over a year. It's amazing how networking can bring you together. Just one thing, and I'm going to ask that you -- did you notice when you move the mike around a lot, it generates a lot of static? Please hold the mike to your mouth and speak into the mike. And again, as Fernando said, each person has 10 minutes, and please be considerate that there are three of you, and the fact is that we would like to ask you questions. All questions will be held until after the three of you have spoken, and then we'll leave room for you to speak, and after that I will introduce to you our second panel, and I will start with Miss Gathright.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Linda Gathright, and I'm currently advisor to Southern New Hampshire to Black Unity, and I've been asked by our Chair, Romey Jones, to sit in representing the organization. I'll give you a little history about OBU or OBU as we're called or better known. We're here in the community to serve as a nucleus of support which will assist black families and/or individuals in acquiring insight into cultural educational, economical, political and social concerns

as they relate to black people and to place such a concern into a positive perspective in the State of New Hampshire.

Our membership extends to the northern part of New Hampshire and the northern part of Massachusetts. We are home-based here at 142 Main Street in Nashua and satellite office on the Revere campus. We sponsor a number of community events, one of the ones that we're mostly well known for is the Martin Luther King breakfast that is held every year. I believe we just had our 12th, and we also sponsored Kwanza celebration once a year in December. We offer scholarships for African American descent. We also offer HIV and AIDS prevention and education. We sponsor a theater and film series here in Nashua. We also have an OBU choir, children's programs. Also every two years sponsor scholarship -- I should say tours of black colleges in the South, and we once a year sponsor a picnic that you all are invited to the second Saturday in August in Reely Park.

I'm here mainly to talk about the relationship I believe with the police department here in Nashua. I got heavily involved some years ago when I was President of OBU and worked and participated in the last Civil Rights Commission Forum that was held

in Manchester, and actually at that point in time, we really didn't have representation coming from Nashua that we have here today. At that time we had a mayor that was very much concerned about Nashua and very supportive of the problems that were occurring in Nashua around racial boundaries. And I believe to this day had he not been totally embarrassed by the situation in Manchester, we would not be where we are today. And I'll leave that part up to the police department to tell you what they have done in trying to bridge the community relationship with the police department, but I do have a few testimonials here from people in Nashua that I received over the last week, and I would like to share those with you. I don't know into what detail I might be able to answer any questions to the testimonials. I did write them down and then sort of put them in my words to a degree, and so I would like to share those at this time.

There was a gentleman that has his own business, African American. I take that back. He is of African descent, but he is here now and he has his own business, and his secretary is a white female, and I'm using the nationalities because that's part of the reason why we believe that some of the things did occur. And him and his secretary had gone out to

lunch and decided at some point in time they were going to stop at the supermarket and in the course of Daniel Webster Highway South was pulled over by a policeman, and during the course of the pull-over the officer asked for the license and the registration, which he was shown, and at that time proceeded to the other side of the car and asked the passenger on the other side if she was okay. And the young lady informed them that, yes, I am okay. He is my employer and that was the essence of that.

The other occasion was -- and this I'm not certain of. It's not that I'm not certain of, but this is something that maybe the police department can address when it's their turn. This person that called the office, he felt that when he was given a ticket that the officer had wrote in on the ticket -- now I don't know if that's a policy in Nashua, but that's something that maybe can be addressed later on. And what the N stood for, no one knows but he was an African American and he thought it meant negro; otherwise, the police department was identifying the person that was given the ticket. And if that is the case, I'm going to say that that is back in 194 -- I believe it was in 195 when we had that meeting, that one of the things that my organization felt was that

there was no true means of identifying or was brought up at that meeting that there was no true means of identifying how we as a community or the police department could identify or keep some sort of record or make officers accountable for the people that they were ticketed because at the time we felt that -- at the time we were throwing out ideas and different things and trying to see if we could make the police department accountable for erratic stops of African Americans and other minorities in Nashua, and I know that during that meeting that it was brought out that maybe there was some type of coding, to be honest with you, that could be listed on the tickets because we felt this was one way of proving that in pretty much every minority household in Nashua that there's at least one person in that household that could tell you their story of being stopped by an officer at that time. So when the person mentioned this about this, I didn't say anything but it did take my mind back to that situation, but maybe that can be addressed at that point in time. Is there something in place currently that identifies the stops that police officers are making?

The other incident was on Main Street. A young man was pulled over, asked for license and

registration, basically was told that he was driving erratic and are you drinking, and he responded, "I don't drink." He was not cited or anything for that pull-over and no other reason given but told, "Be careful. Have a nice day."

Another situation that ended up on a positive note was an African descent and a Mexican gentleman, and I believe it was an -- I'm not going to say altercation but they had disagreements with someone at the Dunkin' Donuts, and it was a Dunkin' Donuts employee that insisted that they leave the building for whatever the reasons might have been, and the officer that was called to the scene, the Mexican and the African felt that he was just as rude as the person there at Dunkin' Donuts, but at the end of that, they were basically asked -- and his exact words to me was the officer said -- he did not ask any questions, just told them to get the hell-out of here now before we arrest you. He did go immediately to the police station after that particular incident and spoke with the in-charge person at that time, and that person actually apologized for the actions of that particular officer.

The only thing that I do know that it was a young officer at the time, and it was not the first

complaint on that nature given to the police department. And they were both satisfied with that. They were very much pleased that someone did respond or someone cared that this had happened to them. I'm trying to get people to go to the police station to make that type of complaint or to let the officers know what is going on. It's just like any other nationality, people feel that there would be repercussions to them or possibly even their children.

One other incident, and I can't say this really relates to Nashua police because I was told that this was the state trooper, and it did happen here in Nashua, and this was just last weekend and this was 2 o'clock in the morning where four black males were driving off Amherst Street and in route to going home. They were stopped and were given a speeding violation. I believe they were supposedly going 50 to 55 in a 40-mile zone, but what struck me to be different, and it could be the norm, I don't know, but I thought it was interesting that the driver of the car was asked to sit in the vehicle with the officer. Basically, they were just asked were they students, were they residents of Nashua, where were we coming from and where were they going, and that could very well be the norm. I don't know.



And the more recent incident of a female being followed from the French Hill area intentionally not to be stopped, but to wrap it up real quickly, that she was followed consistently over a period. For example, she left the French Hill area, went back towards the area down by the Dunkin' Donuts near Seminole Plaza but intentionally, just to see if the officer was following her, and she did come to the conclusion that he was because she doubled back around, went back to the French Hill area where at that time maybe he got a call or something, but all of a sudden, he darted off. But she really felt that it was more a following tactic and for what reason we don't know. Thank you.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you. And, again, I'm reminding you to keep the questions until after each participant has spoken and please remember who spoke, what was said so you may make those notes as you go along. And next we will hear from Pastor Herbert Betancourt who is the Pastor and I know certainly a community person for the Pentecostal Missionary Church.

PASTOR BETANCOURT: My name is Herbert Betancourt, and I work with the Pentecostal Missionary Church. I've been in Nashua for the last 7 years

working in the community in every area. I was invited by Mr. Serpa to be in this. I thank you for that. I. New Hampshire I've been working in many different cities in this country as a community leader and developed different kind of problems in the Hispanic community, and I can tell you we have one of the finest police forces in this country in this city, but we have an alarming increase of Hispanic moving into Nashua, and the last 5 years the number has maybe triple the number of Hispanics that we have in the city. And I say "alarming," because we have use all the resources to place them so many difficulties, and we face him trying to explain to people that moving into the city and every known to the police department in Nashua, every agency in Nashua have to start to open themselves and tried to work with the understanding that these people are here to stay here, they are not going nowhere.

And as a pastor I hear so many different complaints, but you have to go both sides and listening to both sides of the situation, and only one sides and with hesitation members of the community were complaining they were being stopped because they look Hispanics for no apparent reason. People complain that police officer have told them to go back

home, and so many different situations where people have felt uncomfortable. And as community we are being asked for the police to go into an on-going sensitivity training to be able to deal with these people moving into town. We know the police have done it in the past, and we have an excellent Hispanic officer working in the police force, but among the Hispanics are too many and that I think we fixing the difficulty resources to deal with us that you cultural group moving into town, and we are very positive to work with the police.

And in the past it was an open forum that was held here years ago for the community to go and speak to the police, and we tell that will be in every -- something that will be repeated constantly and the way the community can call over there and tell how they feel and what was going on, and it never happened again, but it was a good beginning, but it just never pass a vote, never pass beyond a good beginning. And we are aware that this difference raised tensions between the Hispanics community. We know that Hispanics tends to move together, clusters in big areas and over-crowded apartment.

We have all kind of professional Hispanics in town. We also have Hispanics trying to work

themselves up in the social ladder and sometimes apartments are over-crowded, and we have an issue that we've been facing every single town in this country that are second generation, our kids are born in this country, they are perceived as Americans, and they are not received by Hispanics because they hardly speak Spanish and they feel that they are not wanted nowhere, and that is sometimes what cause them so much trouble in the community is increasing group in our population is more an 50 percent is young Hispanic community, and many of these young people feel they are not belong to nowhere, and that is causing social problems in this community, and I think that we are facing problem with the police department. I will say it is provoked by the police facing problems that it's a community growing and experience many difficulties and sometimes community difficulties are creating problem with the police, but we have to go to get to an understanding and try to settle this difference. Thank you.

MS. HOLMES: Good afternoon. My name is Gloria Holmes. I am a legal permanent resident of the United States. I have been living in the United States for five years. I have a JD Degree from Colombia. I have a Master Degree in Business

Administration at New Hampshire College, and I am currently in the process of obtaining my JD in the United States at Franklin Pierce Center and my Master in Copyrights and Intellectual Property. I have been involved in the community for five years doing a lot of community work, and I feel myself a leader if we could say. However, I am talking today about me personally. I'm shaken to talk about your personal life is a very hard thing.

I didn't want to come here today. Fernando call me, and I didn't even mention to him nothing about what happened to me personally because I want -- I'm shaking.

DR. HOULIHAN: Somebody hold the mike for her.

MS. HOLMES: So, well, I was not coming because I didn't feel or it takes a lot of courage to talk about these things especially when they taught you personally, so I want to say that because I am a leader. I am a person with education. I am a member that is adapted to the community, to society. So imagine those people that do not have the skills and education and the background that I have to come here to this meeting and talk about their feelings and talk about their issues. That is very hard. But I do know

that many people like me is outside, many people that want to stop discrimination in New Hampshire. I was a victim and I am daily a victim of discrimination. When I say "daily" is because I don't trust anymore. So it's like I don't know what to think. It's a lot of confusion that this creates, so I'm going to go to specific issues.

Three years ago I was working in Nashua for a non-profit organization conducting home visits, helping my community in parenting, nutrition, etc. I was very proud with God that gave me the opportunity to come legally to the United States and work and make money enough to buy a nice car, red Grand Cherokee 1995. I was very proud. For first time in my life I could invest what America is all about, invest my money in my dreams, and for me was a dream to have a nice car, so stupid because the payments are too high.

However, I was driving very proudly and, of course, in that line of work when you need to conduct home visits, you ended up rushing too much. You need to do this, you need to go to the meeting so I was speeding. Yes, I do recognize, but the fact that I was speeding doesn't mean that I am a bad citizen or that I could be arrested. So I was stopped by the police officer. I'm going to maintain names in

confidentiality. A police officer from the Nashua Police Station with great record I think they say. I could never find his record. Later on I'm going to explain why, and I have the commendation to support my conversation today.

So I was stopped, and I was asked by the police -- the person that I most respect in my life, God, my family and police. I do have a lot of respect for authority and I said or I devote a lot of respect to police officers, but that was kind of difficult situation because when you respect so much someone, you get nervous, and somehow I was nervous that he stopped me for first time.

So he asked me for my license and registration. I found my license very quickly because I know that I keep my license in my purse, my wallet. No problem at all. However, when I was looking for my registration! I couldn't find it since that was a brand new car that I just bought a week before, and my husband decide to locate the registration in a new compartment that the 195s have. We used to have the old compartment, so I was looking for my registration in the place where we used to put it and I couldn't find it. Of course that jeep was very beautiful, but I didn't know what was the location, and I didn't know

that under your arm you have a compartment to put the CDs and the coins and my husband located the registration in that place.

The police was rude, screaming at me and he say, "Where is your registration?" I get very nervous, and my mind couldn't even find it, could not even think about. He asked me immediately, so they think that you can do many things at the same time, you know, in other words, look for your registration, answer their questions and be quiet at the same time when they are asking you questions. It's very weird. So anyways he asked me, "Where are you from?" That is a very vague question. I responded I am from Manchester because I live in Manchester. Of course, my accent is very noticeable and, therefore, he treated me as a liar. You are not from Manchester. You are a liar. He asked me where are you from again.

I'm sorry. I get too excited. I don't want to put this like a holy drama but it was. So I responded, "I am from Colombia." Oh, dear. I am in trouble because immediately these police officer -- I know that my country have very bad reputation, I know that, for drugs for many things and Juan Valdez, etc., but, well, he asked me, "Oh, so you are from Colombia and what do you do for living here?" So I respond,



"I'm a social worker." A social worker cannot pay this car. They make \$7 per hour. How can someone pay this car? Get out of the car and you are arrested for disobeying a police officer. That was really horrible, horrendous. At that moment, believe me, I thought that he was going to set me up because I say, "My, God. What if he put something in my car?" I knew where he was going because how come he's going to assume that I necessarily is going to do drugs or things because he asked, oh, from Colombia like, you know, we know what people does there. So, of course, I was arrested for disobeying a police officer, and I say, "Why?" And he said, "Because you didn't provide your registration when I ask you." Then thank God he found my registration because he had the right to search my car for cocaine or drugs just because Gloria Holmes is from Colombia. He put me inside the car, and me looking at him searching my car. I am a lawyer and not in the United States yet, pretty soon, but I know that in order to search someone's car, this is a universal law, you need to have a note, what they call a warrant, a search warrant. So I knew that he didn't have it too. I was amazed. I couldn't talk because he say that anything that I'm going to say is going to be against me, so I knew at that point that we were

talking serious stuff and that I was in a very hard situation, and I was just talking to God, telling him to protect me because I felt alone in the middle of this monster.

So I know this is just one individual, but make me wonder how many others are around like that, made me wonder what kind of common sense these people is having as to do these type of things to a leader in the community. Well, I was arrested. I was asked to take my glasses. I could not even see nothing without my glasses. I hardly can see this microphone, and I was arrested for three hours until someone came to me to talk to me. Without my glasses when I see even worse a situation because it is like you're blind. You don't know what is happening, and yet you are in an unjustifiable situation that you don't deserve as human being.

To be concise, this situation ended up that these police officers destroy or the Nashua Police Department feel that because I contact a lawyer and this lawyer request the tapes of the conversation that we had during the transportation from the highway into the police. All time this police officer was talking about his Spanish as they are invading Nashua. I'm just busy with them, what they think about me that I

am just going to work for those criminal? They were talking outrageous things because he was in that a lot of Hispanics were criminal and that he was too busy with us. So I felt that what he was saying was totally unfair. I am a Hispanic, but I am a person with dignity, with honesty. I am an example and role model for my community, and this guy was talking all these statements saying all these statements to me.

Finally I contact a lawyer, and we request a copy of the tapes, you know, that all the conversations are recorded. We request a tape, and by mistake the police department destroyed the tapes after 90 days. Our request was 60 days. The later request made the request we didn't hear from them is we called several times and we never found an answer. After so many phone calls that, of course, I didn't do, my attorney did, we find out that the 90 day expired, and finally we find a response and the response was, "I'm sorry. We destroyed the tapes by mistake." Well, that tapes, in fact, were our proof that all that horrendous statements, racial remarks against Hispanic and people of color in Nashua, New Hampshire, of course that incriminated the department and they destroyed the tapes.

At this point I do not deserve an apology

because I do deserve an apology. I don't want it because I think that the police department needs to do something different. It's not apology for an apology, so I'm not going to talk about the causes, about the causes, the solution because that requires a whole three days to focus groups to work with the community to be to listen what the people have to do, so I not going to concentrate just want my testimony as a proof in corroboration that what we are seeing is not an isolated case. That this is happening to leaders. So now imagine how many of these cases are going to happen to poor people that is not as articulated as me as to defend themselves. Thank you.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much, Gloria. At this time, as we said, we will open it up to questions from each of the panel members that are there.

MR. BRADLEY: Do you have a date on that? Would you give us a date when that incident happened?

MS. HOLMES: Yes, three years ago. I can give you the documentation. I didn't bring it.

MS. TAYLOR: Since then has there been any attempt from the police department to --

MS. HOLMES: Against me, no. But in order to, you know, to deal with this, I have been attending

some support groups because I need to trust. My husband is American. My family, my children. I don't have children, but I know what is coming, and I need to trust again and in order to forgive and deal with this because this is painful, you don't believe. Horrible. It's the worst thing that can happen to someone. I have been attending some support groups, and my story is like a children's story. It's like, whoo, it's so stupid with respect to the stories that I would like to bring to this table, and I'm more than happy to perhaps talk with these people that I have been talking with, but unfortunately everybody should decide individually when to talk.

REVEREND PERKINS: I have a question, and it's really for all three of you, but Gloria said to me, you said something about in order to -- you weren't necessarily asking for an apology, but to look at some of the things that will take place -- maybe the stenographer can go back and repeat it verbatim -- for something that would take three days' training to press for communication. It's not just a few moments of something or just a few written words. What is the feeling of the three of you around sensitivity, cultural or diversity training? Is this something that you're looking for?

MS. HOLMES: No, and that is the problem. I don't conceive diversity training as to learn how to eat beans and rice or how to dance Merengue. This is more than that. And unfortunately there is a misconception around that sensitivity trainings are related to being aware of cultural boundaries, cultural experiences and I don't think so. Sensitivity training is to learn that all of us are equal and to learn that it means to listen to what all the peoples have to put to the table, to start competing in the same level of intelligence because unfortunately people think that they are smarter than us. I'm sorry to speak it like that. It's very antagonistic. We're trying to avoid that, but it happens naturally.

So it's good to combine ideas and sharing and perhaps a case like I will like to see a training where we can do a lot of case work, which is let's go, read a case, what you will do, what you will do and start, you know, articulating different perspectives, point of view and arguments that could bring good, critical thinking to the table as to learn that other people have great things to uphold from other perspectives, and that is pretty much what I'm thinking.

REVEREND PERKINS: A follow-up question, and I don't want to be the one going over the time, but in asking questions again, and I address this again to the three of you: Just who do you think would be at this table when it comes to receiving this type of training, and I'm asking this specifically so that -- what can we as the Commission, what can we as an Advisory Board do?

LINDA GATHRIGHT: I'd like to say that sitting at this table to receive the training, and I'm going to relate this to the School Department because I didn't get a chance to say some of the things I had to say, but to the superintendent of schools. You mentioned that your immediate administrative staff were going to be attending some type of awareness type training or diversity type training, but I want to say that given what's happening in the school district in Nashua that it needs to start immediately with the teachers, and not so much the ESL teachers because, obviously, they have been a part of the children's lives, but the teachers that are outside of that realm that deal with those children, as those last two young ladies spoke and stated what it was like being in a class, their two classes, that were not ESL, and how they felt as far as relating not so much even to the

children but to the teacher alone, so there's issues there. And to the police department I'd like to say that it, yes, it needs to start with the officers, but as they come into the police department a criteria, something that they have to do, and I think we spoke about this before, and I think I heard recently that there's a one-day training at the end of the cadet train and, if so, to me and to my organization that is not enough. Okay. It should be an on-going thing, and your introduction should be similar to the corporate world where you're gone for a week, and they are trying to introduce their culture in the corporate world, and we here in the city are trying to introduce the difficulties and even bring it just into the New Hampshire culture period, and it needs to be an on-going thing, and it should be something that's going on for more than one day, if that is the case.

And it also should start with Chief Largey, okay and, those that represent him, his lieutenants his captains because those are the key people that forced the ones underneath them to do what they need to do around the diversity of Nashua.

So to say start it from the bottom and make it go up, I disagree. It needs to come from the top and funnel down because your bosses and all the



officers that are here, your bosses are the ones that have the responsibilities to make you do your job, and if you can't do your job around the diversity in Nashua and the people in the community in general, then in reality we should not have those positions.

DR. FOURNIER: Unfortunately, sometimes no amount of training will change attitudes of adults.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Then they should not have positions.

DR. FOURNIER: And I think you have to start very early in education. I've been in education all my life, and if you don't start early, parents transmit their attitudes to their children, and children act out these attitudes in among their peers. I think you have to start very early in elementary education to instill in children the appreciation of the people. And if you don't start there and from the top down and from the bottom up, you'll never get anywhere. I don't know if you feel that way about it.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: I agree with that. Don't get me wrong. The home has a lot to do with what goes on in our society also. But I'm speaking, and as we are here, we're speaking about the people that teach our children each day and how they handle certain situations within the system, whether it's in the

school system or in the community, and so that's what I'm relating this particular situation to. Okay.

Where we have our other responsibilities, yes, we do have responsibility as parents by all means.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much.

It's been a very enlightening panel. I appreciate all the things that you brought to the Advisory Board.

And we did this in the reverse, but now I'll introduce to you panel number 2.

MR. STEWART: Before you do it, the question I want to ask the next panel, as a lawyer from Columbia and fellow about to be graduated of Franklin Pierce, is it your impression from the people you're talking to in the support group that there is a pattern of practice or are you looking at yourself as a unique situation?

MS. HOLMES: Well, when you talk about pattern of practice, you are talking about an intentional act, and unfortunately or fortunately discrimination does not require intention. So you can discriminate someone without intention. So, of course, I not talking about -- pattern of practice is not necessary in discrimination.

MR. STEWART: Rephrase. is it happening? i  
it happening to other people?

PASTOR BETANCOURT: Yes, sir.

MR. STEWART: That's your impression?

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Absolutely.

MS. HOLMES: Yes.

MR. STEWART: That's your impression and your impression. okay, thank you.

REVEREND PERKINS: I don't want to rush, but is there anything else because I want to give the police an opportunity?

DR. HOULIHAN: I just wanted to add just this little bit to the home and the school and the education part. You do have to remember these people who are employed are also getting their checks through the state and also through the city, so they do have a big responsibility in representing the community.

REVEREND PERKINS: Anything else?

MR. EPAPHRAS: Just one thing. Gloria's --

JOSEPH BORGES: Good afternoon. My name is Joseph S. Borges. I live in Nashua, New Hampshire. I'm 72 years of age, and I'd like to see -- which one is Chief Largey? Which one is Mr. Bailey? I have something to say. I was born Jose Borges 72 and a half years ago. That is an American of Portuguese descent. I'm not going to get into the ethnicity of myself or any of the Brazilian, Latin, Brazilian

population that's coming in and working or the Portuguese people that have finally had their own church. I don't think any of those people have anything to say that's bad about the Nashua Police Department in any way, matter of form. In a sense maybe nor do I, but something's wrong in Nashua. I read an article from Chief Largey about two or three months ago, letters sent in by people complaining about cars parked, that they couldn't park their car.

Chief Largey made this statement and it was in the newspaper: It is up to the discretion of the Nashua police officers when they go to a location or to anywhere else. I myself was stopped one night, and I thought I was harassed that night. I'm not going to give you the name of the car. I've had them park in front of my house, and I don't know why. I've had them park across the street as though they are trying to catch speeders and I don't know why. I don't know why certain officers in the City of Nashua don't have the intelligence that they should have to be doing some of the things that they are doing to the public, and I can't blame Captain Bailey, and I can't blame the police officers. It's not just every police officer. There are fine police officers. I know that when I had a store in downtown Nashua years ago,

Captain Sandler, the chief was Sandler, the police officers there could not come into your store and waste any time. They'd come in and say hello, but they had to go out because they were on duty. Everything has changed now. Everything has changed.

I made a complaint to the Nashua Police Department. I had the nerve to go to the Nashua Police Department and make a complaint. I have the date and the time of that complaint. And I told a girl at the counter that somebody had entered my home, and I told her what they did, and I also said that somehow or other somebody has been able to get the key to my home whenever they want, and somebody in that neighborhood does things. They don't steal money. What they do is take this thing and put it here and take that thing and put it there. I went to the police department and I made a complaint. I said, "Somebody entered my home Thursday, and I'd like it investigated, and I asked to see Captain Heffernon who I was told was the Chief of the Relations. At that time Larry Nolan was there. I saw a detective who half of these people have arrested on my street. I waited for three quarters of an hour, and a police office came in from out in the street, and he says my name is so and so which I have there.

He says, "You're lucky. I'm a detective."  
He said, "I've had detective training." And he said,  
"If you have anything to say, let's go into that  
little room."

And I gladly walked into that little room,  
and I hope that that was taped. I have the time, but  
I doubt that it was taped. They probably lost that  
tape too because I told them what was happening to me.  
You know what he said to me? I'll tell you what he  
said to me. He said, "Get ADT." He says, "You think  
the police officers in Nashua have time to be watching  
your house?" I said, "No, I don't think they have the  
time. I've lived here. I've been a businessman.  
I've lived here all these years. Why should I be  
suffering this kind of thing of not knowing what's  
going to happen to me when I go out? Why should I  
have a police officer come up to me and say, Didn't  
you see that ambulance behind you --

REVEREND PERKINS: Sir, we thank you very  
much for your comments. I don't want to cut you off.

RAY RODRIGUEZ: That's all right. You can  
cut me off, but I'm just telling that something is  
wrong, not with every police officer, but there's a  
few of them that are not rational.

REVEREND PERKINS: We do appreciate that,

and that's a complaint in the neighborhood. I do know from working on a crime watch team that you can do that, and believe you me, I've seen a lot of police reports where people in the communities have called in and voiced complaints, so I think that's one of the issues that you certainly can take up, and they'll be more than happy to receive your report, but we're not disregarding that, but we want to be mindful of civil rights issues and some of the way, since this is community-police relations, how they're working with the community, and perhaps might get an opportunity -- not put them on the spot because they weren't asked to do this -- if there's anything around the other panels that need to be discussed. Thank you very much Panelists for your participation.

It is now time for panel No. 2 to come on to actually do the community relationship part of it. I will read the invitees first Chief Clifton Largey, Nashua Police Department; Bob Hodges, Community Policing Liaison, Nashua Police Department; Captain Richard Bailey, Nashua Police Department, officer Sergio Hebra, Nashua Police Department; and Mike LaDue. He was here and had to leave. Let me preference this by, first of all, I need to say this is Chief Largey got asked at the very last moment, I

think as of yesterday, about being here for this, this particular briefing, but he did send and respond by sending a letter to the group and who his representatives are that are here today, and a lot of these people you know yourselves because most of them work with them in some form or another. And I read from Captain Largey his direct response to me personally.

"Reverend Bertha Perkins, Cultural Baptist Church, Ashley, New Hampshire. Dear Reverend Perkins, I am very proud of the new initiatives that we have developed with the minority communities in Nashua and believe we are a most progressive department in this area. Members of my command staff have been deeply involved and committed to the development and implementation of these community initiatives. As I am unable to attend the New Hampshire Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights briefing on community concerns, staff members will be attending on my behalf. They will be able to outline the efforts the Nashua Police Department has made to improve relationships between the department and the minority communities of Nashua. As you may know, Nashua was selected as the number one place to live in the United States by Money Magazine. I feel that one



of the reasons for this distinction is the close-knit community that makes up Nashua. The commitment by the Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee, Outreach For Black Unity and other organizations have labored with the Nashua Police to make the city have an even closer working relationship."

And I do have to say this because Chief Largey is not here, but I do have to say that he has worked very hard with us on that and has worked and has been involved in the community. And one thing he has done from the top -- we talked about from the top going down. From a personal point I have to say that that's one thing that he has done, but I'm going to let each officer speak for themselves and do their presentation.

The first person that will speak will be Robert M. Hodges. He's a retired Captain of that. He's a retired captain of the Nashua Police Department with 27 years of service, currently employed as a civilian employee of the Nashua PD working to establish community policing within the Nashua Police Department, currently on the Board of Directors of the French Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., a non-profit organization focused on providing quality, affordable housing in the French Hill and Tree Street

areas of the city and former member of the Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee, so it would be Bob Hodges. After he speaks I will introduce Captain Richard Bailey and Officer Sergio Hebra. After they have spoken, then we'll take the questions.

CAPT. HODGES: Thank you, Reverend Perkins. I have to tell you I came here today very positive, full of vigor because I was very pleased to go over what we've done in Nashua. And hearing the complaints I'm distressed. I'm distressed for the fact that those exist. We do have ways of handling those. I'd like to outline some of the positive things we've done here in Nashua. In 1994 we met with a Nashua Ethnic Awareness Community and Members of Outreach For Black Unity to discuss communications with the police department. That was a very emotional meeting. It was a very enlightening meeting. As a result of that, and I have to tell you this, the chief had every command staff person in the police department -- based upon that we developed a plan to improve communications, and I'd like to go over with you some of the stuff that we have done. We wanted to develop a strong partnership with the ethnic communities in Nashua. We developed a strong partnership with the fellowship Baptist church. Their members have

assisted us in developing youth programs for the children in the Tree Streets of Nashua, have assisted us in running our Police Athletic League programs out of the Ashby Community Center, and we've assisted them. They actually reside in our church that we actually own. We're probably the only police department in the United States to own a church. I don't know how we did it but we did, so we developed a partnership with them. They have been an invaluable resource to us in changing the complexion of crime down in that Tree Street area. They've turned kids around, brought kids' grades up from Ds and Fs to As and Bs and the Nashua Police Department's committed to our youth because we see that as the way to change things in the future.

We have held periodic community meetings in the Tree Street and the French Hill neighborhood. Those are difficult meetings. To tell you the truth, it's very frustrating when you announce the meeting, you put it in the paper, you send flyers out in English and Spanish to the entire neighborhood, and you have three people show up. But that's happened, and we continue to have those meetings.

We've worked with members of the community to improve our city neighborhoods working on issues

such as trash, vandalism, trying to make things a little bit better. We've assigned our officers into the patrol areas for long-term assignments in excess of a year. That's been very fruitful for us. We've found that by putting officers in a particular area, the neighbors feel more comfortable with those particular officers because they know the officers, the beat cop on the street corner that we all remember when we were growing up, and our officers prefer it simply because they know the people in the community, they feel accepted in the community, they don't feel like an occupied Army.

We have developed neighborhood policing officers throughout the city. We have five. We have one on Ash Street, Toll Street, Railroad Square, Brook Village Road and The Pheasant Lane Mall. We've developed interaction with youth groups in Nashua. We're really focusing on developing a positive relationship with the youth. We have a center on Ash Street, our Police Athletic League Center there, we have a homeless support center which our officers go and volunteer their time to help kids with their school work, bring those school grades up, to show them a role model.

We have a police officer and mentor program,

and we have a teen drop-in center to give the kids a safe place to go and spend their time. We invite members of Nashua's ethnic communities to attend our system police academies to find out why we do what we do. It's very difficult to understand why police do what they do unless you can be in the role of the police officer. Some of the complaints we heard here today are probably answerable if you knew the procedure police go through, why we do what we do. We brought people into that and we've changed attitudes.

We've developed a Professional Standards Division to deal with complaints against our officers. It's a full-time division manned by a captain and two sergeants, and they've developed a guide to teach how to report complaints against police officers, report concerns against police officers and also report positive things the police officers have done. And I have copies of that guide here today.

We've developed a strategy to attract and increase our minority and female applicants. We've advertised in Spanish language newspapers. We've gone to cities with larger minority populations and recruited from those cities, and I'm proud to say that we've doubled our minority police officer -- amount of police officers in Nashua in the last four years.

We've implemented diversity training as a core for our curriculum for new police officers and mandatory training for all police officers. To date every police officer in Nashua has gone through diversity training. We've maintained a command officer presence, not a police officer presence, but a command officer presence to the Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee so that we can deal with problems and get them taken care of fairly quickly.

When I was a captain, I was on the Ethnic Awareness Committee. When I retired Captain Bailey took over and was on the Ethnic Awareness Committee. We feel that we are a progressive department, put our record of being proactive in the area of minority relations up against in the state or in New England. We feel that we worked very hard to try and make Nashua a great place to live, and at this point in time, I think I'll turn it over to Reverend Perkins, and you can introduce Captain Bailey.

REVEREND PERKINS: Captain Richard Bailey is a 23-year veteran of the Nashua Police Department. He has been Detective Bureau Commander, Legal Commander. Currently he's Patrol Bureau Commander, and he's also a very active member, and so is his secretary, of the City of Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee.

CAPT. BAILEY: I'm not as comfortable as I'd like to be, but I am glad to be here and, as Reverend Perkins said, one of my functions, and I hate to call it a function, of being a police officer because, I take it as more than that, as being a member of the Ethnic Awareness Committee. I currently hold the position of secretary. Don't ask me how I got that. If you saw my writing and my typing, you'd question it, but I think there was nobody else at that meeting, but that's the function I have. I'm also the chairman of one of the committees, subcommittees within the committee, and that's what I'd like to talk to you a little bit about and then get into my functions on the police department as well, but initially I'd like to talk to you about my role in the Ethnic Awareness Committee and where we're going because I think it's important for you to know that.

The Awareness Committee back when it was originally formed was formed because of controversy, because of the need for it and it arose out of controversy, and it was I think a difficult time because they never had a chance at that point in time to gel and find out where they were going. They were kind of tossed into the fire, and the fire was going full tilt at that time. Since then things have

changed in Nashua. I don't think we're in heaven yet, but we've definitely risen a little bit since back in those days. The Ethnic Awareness Committee was disbanded for a short period of time, and it was reorganized about a year or so ago, and at that time I was appointed by the Mayor. The Ethnic Awareness Committee consists of 15 members which are community members representing various ethnic groups, business people within the city and government officials from within the city.

We've recently established goals that we are looking at as a committee and trying to go after. The goals are to identify representatives of each of the ethnic groups within our city, and that we're finding is a little harder than we thought it was going to be and a lot more work than we thought. We are striving towards that goal though. We're also trying to update our brochure and make it more available to the community, so the community is a little more aware of the fact that we are here and what we are trying to do.

The committee that I represent is the committee that's been formed to first initiate some type of training or find some type of training in the area of cultural awareness and diversity, as we feel



there was a strong need for that in our community, and we've recently identified some training that we would like to attend, and now we're trying to find the funds to attend the training. The training's in Washington, and the goal of the training is to train six members of our committee to be trainers so that we can train members of our committee and train within the city. Our thought process was to bring people in from outside of our city to train us in the cultural awareness and diversity. We don't know the particular problems or the nature of our city didn't make a lot of sense, so we're working towards that goal, and I think we'll accomplish it before the end of this year. Having done that, the things that we want to do with that, once we have the trainers is to get into the different areas of the city, specifically the police department, the school department and other government agencies and probably private agencies. I think there's going to be quite a demand for the training once we start the training, which we anticipate there will be quite a demand. That's part of the reason we're trying to train three teams of two, so we don't kill any two people and send them out every day of the week. I'd like to switch back to the police department. I've been a member of the police

department for 23 years. I have two children. One attends Nashua High School. The other just graduated last year and attends the University of New Hampshire. As a police officer and as a parent, I'm very concerned about what goes on in our city, and I'm very concerned about how our police officers deal with people who live in the city, not just the ethnic community but the community on a whole, and I listen to the complaints that you've all made.

The nature of our job is going to result in complaints being made. That is never going to end. We don't always make friends. It's part of what we do. But to listen to your complaints -- and I take them very seriously. I just want to tell you that we also hear the same types of complaints from time to time from every citizen, every ethnic group, whites, whatever. I hear it from my kids' friends. I got stopped, why did the policeman do that to me? Usually there's a pretty good explanation, and sometimes there isn't. And on that note, Chief Largey has done something within the Nashua Police Department that has not been done with any other police department in the state when he did it. Since then there have been a few departments that have followed suit and followed him. But what he did was he established a full-time

professional standards office. That is an office that's geared towards handling citizens' complaints, looking at them, welcoming citizen complaints. That's something the police for years kind of shied away from. We didn't like it when people complained about it. Nobody does, but we've taken this proactive approach to it.

Bob Hodges talked about the guide. We try to make these available to citizens. This is a guide of how to make a complaint against the police. When we receive a complaint, all the complaints are investigated fully, and I won't read this to you. If you'd like one, I think there are enough to go around. It tells you what our procedure is, what we try to do. We don't want our police officers doing things wrong in the street. I will tell you that. That is not my feeling alone. That is the feeling of the chief, the deputy chief, the entire command staff and those that flow down beyond us. It's not fun. It's not pleasant to sit here and hear the complaints. I'm glad I hear them. I don't enjoy them. It makes me sweat I guess. I felt uncomfortable. If you didn't see me, I was squirming. I was in the back, but you probably didn't see me. It's not a comfortable feeling, but we need to know those things, and we want to know them.

Along other lines, I'd like to go a little bit into a gentleman that's up in the back and spoke. He made one point that I would like to address that I think is important in the police relations within the community. Years ago when Chief Sandler was the chief, and it wasn't anything that Chief Sandler did wrong. It was the way the police acted at the time. If I had gone into a store and had a cup of coffee and talked to a store owner or I stopped at the park and took my hat off and threw a basketball or a baseball with some kids, I would be brought in and I would be reprimanded, what are you doing? Go do your job. Go do some police work. We now encourage our officers to do that. You will see officers walking in areas, riding bicycles, stopping in playgrounds, playing with kids, talking to kids, going into businesses more and more. Sometimes we get a different response from people like why are you here? Why did you come in here, and why are you talking to me? We want to know who you are and what's going on, if you have any problems. So that's something that we do a lot more of, and you can call it community policing. You can call it whatever you want. It's just good police business, and it's good public awareness.

That's about all I really want to say, other

than if you have complaints, if you know people have complaints, we're not afraid to take them. We want to hear them. We will deal with them. We're not going to throw them in the trash. We're going to address them. We don't want our police officers harassing anybody. And if we can avoid that, if we can change attitudes, that's what we would like to do. If we don't know about it, it's harder for us to do something about it. Thank you.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you. our next officer is Officer Sergio Hebra. He's a 12-year veteran of the Nashua Police Department, one of the first community policing officers assigned on long-term assignments to the Tree Street area of Nashua, currently assigned to the Problem Oriented Policing Unit.

CAPT. HODGES: Before I get started with Sergio Hebra, I have to be fair to him. I told him at noontime he was going to have to be here today. He said, "How long do I have to speak?" I said, "About a half hour, hour and a half. Something like that." And the reason we asked Sergio to come here today is because being one of the first officers to have a long-term assignment in the Tree Street area, he's done an excellent job down there, and he's developed a

unique rapport down in the Tree Streets, and that's why we asked him to come here and talk a little bit about his feelings when he went on the street and maybe the change in the feelings in the community once he got there. So now you know what I want you to talk about.

OFFICER HEBRA: At least you gave me some notice. My name is Sergio Hebra. I'm a Cuban officer. That's how I'm labeled, and that's the way I've been labeled since day one, and unfortunately, the society that we live in, it seems that we have to address people by where they come from, what color they are and the list goes on. I don't like it. I'm offended by it because I'd like to be consider as Sergio Hebra. I'm a police officer. I got a label. I live with it, and that's my job I guess. I have no problems with that. I can understand how people get uncomfortable when the labels and the categories get thrown around. Some people take it as insults and whatnot, but I think that comes from society, I think it comes from upbringings, educations, that as you grow up, you see a kid and you label him. That's the black kid down the street. That's this Cuban kid over here. This is the Asian kid over here. That's the way society has started. I don't think we're going to

change in, like somebody said, in a one-day meeting. That's going to take a lot of education and a lot of in-depth research and resources that I don't think the police department has to take on. As far as being a community police officer, I got assigned that quite some time ago. It seems like a very long time ago.

Being fluent in Spanish, I think I fit very well into the downtown area where most the Hispanic people, bilingual people were living at the time. When I became a police officer, I thought I was going to change the world. I thought I was going to save people. I thought I was going to steer kids from drug activity and criminal activities onto playing field and back into the classroom. I got a rude awakening when that didn't work out for me, but we're still going at that.

The kids accepted me right from the very beginning because I was one of them, and that's quote, unquote. I was one of them. I never liked to be in the cruiser. I always went out in the street. If I could, I'd park that cruiser, hang out on the street corner as much as I could because I could hear what was going on. I found out what kids was doing what. I found out what family were the law-abiding families, and I found out what families were the trouble

families, and I was able to steer my efforts into the problem areas.

As time went on and the kids realized that, hey, every time we tell this guy something, these people over here get arrested or vice versa. They realize that the information they were giving me I was using going to arrest other people. That communication eventually stopped. I can't blame them because they realized what was going on. I made some fantastic arrests, and then I felt like, okay, these kids are trusting me. They are like, hey, that kid over there, he's got a bag of weed in his pocket, that sort of thing, and now I was taking that friendship, which basically is what it was. They were telling me things that they were telling their buddies, and then I'd turn around and I'd arrest the kid. So you got kind of put in a very difficult situation as a police officer. Am I a cop or am I their friend? As parents, are we parents or are we the kid's best friend? You can't be both, and that was one of the things that I was having difficulties establishing.

As my recent assignment, I was able to get out of the Tree Street area a little bit and go down to the Pheasant Lane Mall and deal with some different problems down there, but I'm still somewhat in touch



with what's going on in the downtown area.

I know there are a lot of complaints that are being made by people. There have been some comments made here today. A lot of them I'm not going to address because I don't have the rank to address. I'd love to address, but I think we'd probably get in some type of argument. We as police officers are street officers. We do certain things that to the common folks out there, they may think that's accusatory, aggressive type of patrol tactics, whatever. I'm not going to sit here and make excuses for an officer's being rude. That happens, and that officer is going to have to stand and look himself in the mirror with that. I'm not going to address that.

As far as driving around and people feeling that they are being targeted, a lot of things go on inside certain areas of the city that police officers have information to what may be happening, to whom may be involved in something. Unfortunately, some of these officers may take it a little bit further; some don't respond to it at all.

The female that was being followed from the French Hill area down to the Main Street area and then back up to the French Hill area, God only knows what that officer was doing. I'm not going to sit in

judgment and second guess either person. There's two sides to everything, and it's very difficult to sit here and listen to one side accusing us, the police, and in general topics the police as doing this this and that. We get just as much offended when we get accused by the public that all cops are this, all cops of that, you can't trust cops, just as minorities feel that they get generalized or categorized. It's unfair. There are two sides to every story, and I think the Internal Affairs Division has entertained quite a few of these complaints, and I feel that from what I hear from the other cops, that they are getting brought in, they are being interviewed, they are being questioned. So those complaints are carrying a lot of weight from the community which is a response that the police department has had to the community. Other than that, I'm sure people have a lot of questions, so I'll stop there.

REVEREND PERKINS: How much time do we have for questions? I'm going to ask, if there's a lot of questions please allow the person who is asking the question to ask the question and then give time for a response to that question, and then the next. Just general courtesy.

AUDIENCE: Captain Hodges, you mentioned

your recruitment for minorities. Could you give me a little bit more information as far as the ratio of the ethnic background, per say, of the minorities being hired in the Nashua Police Department?

CAPT. HODGES: One of the big problems we have, and it's certainly a problem for us, is getting qualified applicants simply because we can't pay as much as Boston, we can't pay as much as Lowell. We can't pay as much as some of these big cities, so obviously people are going to go where the money's at. They are going to go down there where the benefit packages, the union packages are strong, and that isn't Nashua, New Hampshire we're a department that's under a budget cap. We have a 2.8 percent budget cap per year. They cut our budget every year, and so it's very difficult to get qualified minority applicants. It's difficult to get any applicant in this job environment out there. So what we've done is we've gone and sent out recruiters to the places with the larger minority population where we might be able to find somebody that might want to relocate to Nashua, may want to come up and work in our city, and we've been able to do that.

We were lucky we were able to get a black officer who was certified out of Hudson, New Hampshire

and bring him into the department. We were able to get a female black officer who was out of Lowell, Massachusetts, hired her away from Lowell. In fact, we got her right before Lowell gave her an offer of appointment. So we've been trying very hard, but it's a very difficult job environment. People are having trouble getting anybody to work for them, and to try and get a good quality applicant, it's very difficult under the pay we offer. But we are working towards that. We're targeting the newspapers in those particular areas. We're sending people out with word of mouth. We're going down, we're talking to people who we think will probably make good police officers, seeing if we can get them to becoming a police officer, so we're talking an active role in trying to do that.

AUDIENCE: Just one other quick question. What other type of assimilation do you have in-house for minorities coming into a predominantly white environment, especially where the police department is looked upon as a threat, per say, to the minorities on the outside? So what are you doing with assimilation?

OFFICER HEBRA: As far as the patrolmen go, and I'm going to speak for the patrolmen, and the minority officers, me included, we've been accepted

from day one. once we got sworn in as police officers, I don't know -- people call it the brotherhood and people call it family and everything else. It's a place of employment. It's a very tight-knit community in there within that police department.

I honestly don't see racism targeted towards us, towards that group that's there. We don't just associate with ourselves. We get invited to different people's houses, white folks. We got some Portuguese officers, Portuguese background, two officers that have Portuguese background. Irish folk. The whole nine yards. We go with the different officers that are there, and it's not segregated at all whatsoever. It seems that -- and I know I'm speaking on behalf of the other guys because we often talk about how we're very few and all that other stuff, but we've been accepted quite well there. No problems whatsoever that I can personally say that I've seen. I've been there quite a while now.

CAPT. HODGES: If I can just add something to what he said there. I think it's the nature of the job, the fact that our lives depend on each other, that we're out there having to depend on one another so that cuts through. it becomes the fact that I protect you, you protect me, and that's why we're such

an organization.

RAY RODRIGUEZ: My name is Ray Rodrigues. I'm a counselor as well as I do work in the areas of diversity. Some of the work that I have done in diversity was with Fleet Bank when there was this huge issue that occurred a number of years ago, and there was some serious issues around loaning monies to minority populations, and we worked with Fleet Bank at the high-end level. Now someone mentioned the diversity training and the kind of diversity training that we need, which is to really work with the folks that are at the highest levels because that is really where the power is. That's where the decision-making gets done. And we need to begin to look at the issues of sensitivity, but a lot further than just look at the superficial kinds of things but what is that population as we think of the Hispanic population, what is that population costing Nashua?

REVEREND PERKINS: Is that your question?

AUDIENCE: Nobody's going to answer that question for me right now. What is it costing Nashua? Does this population contribute to Nashua? Does it contribute to the multi-culturalism really here in Nashua? What are some of the sensitivities that the Hispanic population brings to Nashua? Do we look at

the positive aspects of that first before we begin to make assumptions about what these people are or who these people are and what they bring to the community, so I'm sort of making a statement here for a generalized statement, but I think there's lots of questions that we need to ask. We need to train ourselves really to ask those kinds of questions rather than to make assumptions.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Gloria Holmes was mentioning about the tapes, and it was all destroyed in 90 days. Maybe you're changed a little bit. I myself have experienced an officer, where are you from. I said, "I'm from Kansas." Where are you really from? Well, I'm from Manchester. What does it make difference to an officer whether I'm from Kansas or Worcester or Manchester?

CAPT. BAILEY: As far as the tape goes, there is a policy within the Nashua Police Department, and I'm a little confused as to what tapes she's talking about. The radio transmissions are kept for 90 days, and then they are reused unless there's a request for them. There's also booking tapes, but not every booking is taped. There's certain regulation as to what would be taped, and a motor vehicle offense

like she described would not be generally taped. So it's probably the radio transmission tapes that they were looking at, and that would just be the communications between the officer and headquarters over the police radio. In 90 days they are gone over again.

MS. HOLMES: Since I am the person that spoke about that, first of all, I would like to say that I'm willing to document my statement, so you don't feel like you police officer respond, and we are just talking here about things that are not concrete. We need to provide the documentation, so I want to indicate that because I'm a credible individual from the community. Secondly, the details about my case are not the object of this discussion, so I am more than happy to share that since I sued the Nashua Police Department and I won, so I have to pass through this process, through all the, like I say, searching and testimonies and interrogatories, etc., so let's start from the fact that you cannot defend yourself anymore. That is not the good way to start this conversation. It's like I am innocent. No, we're not blaming at you. We are talking in general about issues that happened. So my case is not the object of discussion in this meeting, and, therefore, I don't



allow any more comments about my particular case. I will allow more general statements about what can we do to deal better with our communities.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you, Gloria.

CAPT. BAILEY: I just want to say that I don't think I was making any defense. I was answering a question.

MR. EPAPHRAS: Similar, I was asking Gloria not particular, but in similar case what they do because I want their procedure or policy, what kind of communication is kept, what kind of communication is destroyed.

MS. HOLMES: And to respond to the Cuban police officer, I am more than happy to provide all the documentation so he knows that we are not talking about generalizations but practical issues.

CAPT. BAILEY: To answer the second part of your question, and this is just something that if I were to ask that question of you, where are you from, the only reason I think I would ever ask it is if I was having a hard time communicating with you, and I was thinking of maybe trying to get an officer who speaks that language to come and help me. But I wouldn't ask it of you because -- we don't have any Middle Eastern type officers and I'm assuming --

REVEREND PERKINS: Are there any other questions.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Your adversity training now entails how many days? I presented that earlier to you.

CAPT. HODGES: I can probably handle that because I was in charge of training. It's a block of time. I think it runs four hours, and I understand that you said a week would be appropriate. I'd love to be able to do that. I wish I had a budget that would allow me to do that. I wish we were a private corporation, cut a profit and I could invest that back into the department. Unfortunately we are a union police department. We have five unions within the department. To have my police officers come to training, I'd have to pay them. I'd have to pay them three hours to come to one block of training, so I have to pay them at least three hours per individual based upon a time and a half figure.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: So is one block of training considered four-hour training?

CAPT. HODGES: It's one block of training I think annually, and then we up that, but to sit back and say we can do five days is just something that -- I don't have the budget to do that. I'd love to be

able to. I don't have the budget.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: To answer my question, is four hours though; is that correct?

CAPT. HODGES: Yes.

CAPT. BAILEY: I'd like to add to that, if I could. Going back to what I spoke about in trying to develop trainers to train within the city, part of that training obviously will benefit the police department because we will bring the trainers back to the police department and try to train. We do try

To train on duty. It's hard because we need to put our policemen out in the street. The police department has made a commitment to the Ethnic Awareness Committee to pay for one person to be trained, and it's quite a big chunk of money out of our training budget, but they have made that commitment, so we're trying to go in the right direction. Training is difficult.

REVEREND PERKINS: To keep us on time, we have five minutes left. I do recognize the lady in the back.

AUDIENCE: I just had a quick question. Is the diversity training mandatory?

CAPT. HODGES: Yes.

AUDIENCE: For everyone on the force?

CAPT. HODGES: Yes, everyone on the force, and that would include command staff.

MS. CHAPLAIN: How much training is there in the police academy?

CAPT. HODGES: There's 12 weeks, and I really don't have the curriculum for that. We in addition to doing the 12 years of training that the state requires, we additionally have our officers put in four weeks of training where we would expose them to the diversity training. The problem I think you have in diversity training in the state-wide environment is you have officers that have a population of 300, and you have people that are very rural and people that are very city oriented going to one academy, so we prefer to have our officers in front of us and train our officers in exactly how we want them to act, and to have that diversity training done at our academy rather than the state.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much. The last question I will give it to Fernando, and I turn it over to him at this time.

MR. SERPA: Follow-up some about the complaint process. First of all, is this available in other languages?

CAPT. HODGES: It is, and the minute I

handed it out, I realized that I didn't include the ones in Spanish, but we do have it in Spanish.

MR. SERPA: How are they distributed?

CAPT. HODGES: We have them at all of our substations. We have them at the front desk of the police station. They are posted when you walk in.

MR. SERPA: Have you considered placing them in other non-threatening areas?

CAPT. HODGES: We have. They have been thrown away. We have done that and they've been thrown away.

MR. SERPA: Like libraries?

CAPT. HODGES: I don't know if we've used libraries. I know we've used communities centers and things like that, so they have been thrown away.

MR. SERPA: Do you know percentage wise or numbers wise how many complaints have been filed this past year?

CAPT. HODGES: I was preparing to have that today. I don't have that. We do have that figure. I just sort of forgot about it, but I can tell you this: I did check and see if there were any race relating complaints, discrimination complaints and there were not. And I would like to say something here. We've had a lot of people say that there's some complaints

that are sort of unfounded, hearing them secondhand. We're not mind readers here. If our officers are making mistakes out there, we need to know about them. We want to know about them as much as you want some type of resolution to the problem. You have to make a complaint. You have to come and tell us because if we have an officer that's doing something wrong out there, that remains hidden to the staff until we know about it, and until we can substantiate it. The officers running this division here is very aggressive. They will go out, and they will find out the truth, and if their officer's wrong, it will be taken care of accordingly.

CAPT. BAILEY: I'm part of that whole professional standards thing. Police departments historically just wait for something to happen. You wait for the big bad thing to happen, and then you dealt with it. What we're trying to do is find out the problems, if there's a problem and curtail them. If somebody's falling off the line, to grab them and bring them back in line before they tumble down the side of the mountain and they are not recoverable. We spend a lot of time and money invested in every police officer, amazing amounts of money, and we don't want to lose a police officer. If we have a bad police

officer, then yes, let's get rid of them, but if we have one that just seems to be veering a little bit, this process we hope will let us see that and we can bring that person back, send them to training or do what we need to do to get them back to where they should be.

MR. SERPA: Do you have any idea on lawsuits that have been filed or settled against the police department?

CAPT. HODGES: We do not.

REVEREND PERKINS: I'm going to do these three people, and I know this could go on and on, and one of the reasons why we decided just to have two groups is because we know the intensity of the some of the things that people might have to bring forth. But in this order, Gloria and Linda and Ray, but please do not take a long time because we have extended the questions longer. one minute each. And I will give it back to Fernando, but I do want to say this, and I'll be out of this. I want to thank Bob, I want to thank Rick and I want to thank Sergio and even Mike who was here. I want to thank Chief Largey, and I want to thank the panelist for the first group as well for your taking the time representing the communities, being quite frank and honest in coming forth with your

questions, and I realize how hard and how sensitive it  
wast and one person in one group in particular. I  
want to particularly thank Gloria because it was  
personalized. I can see her pain is still there, what  
she's going through, and I also have to thank the  
police department, the representatives that are here.  
They were not prepared for this, didn't know that was  
going to come up and but still sticking it out and  
answering. They didn't run away from and answering it  
as best they can because in spite of -- I know they're  
police officers, but before being that, there are  
human beings and do have a job. I personally as being  
the facilitator of this particular group, I want to  
say thank you to everybody that's here, and I  
certainly hope that this has been worthwhile, that  
we've all gotten something from it, and we will be  
able to go on and do the things, that we will have a  
better relationship between community and police. Now  
Gloria, Linda, Ray, Fernando.

MS. HOLMES: For saying that, I say thank  
you for my part to you because it's great to just find  
out this type conversation and your willingness to  
listen. I just have one final question. I notice  
that the police department and you have indicated a  
lot of emphasis in training which I consider very



useful. However, have you considered some kind of changes in the disciplinary actions that you impose to the police officers when they engage in this type of behavior because seems to me that the disciplinary actions have not accordingly to the type of behavior that should not be tolerated, and I know that we need to complain. I was not complaining because I didn't know about this, so I appreciate you indicating and creating these forms. However, I do understand that the disciplinary actions again are very far away or askew from what should be the reprimand. So have you considered a change in the position in the criteria that you are using to impose disciplinary actions to police officers that engage in this type of behavior?

CAPT. HODGES: What we try to do is if there's a complaint that's substantiated and brought to the chief as a substantiated complaint, the command staff which consists of the chief, the deputy chief and seven captains or six, the captains -- the seventh captain is the professional standards officer's. He doesn't get involved in the disciplinary part. He's involved in the investigative, but we come together as a staff and we discuss it and talk about the type of discipline that we feel is necessary.

MS. HOLMES: So do you have an objective

criteria where the public in general can stick with the outlines of the requirements? In other words what I want to say is pretty subjective to criteria to impose disciplinary action is up to the committee. Sometimes they are friends. They support each other, they love each other and they cover each other. So I wonder if there's some kind of objective criteria?

CAPT. HODGES: It's difficult to have an objective criteria because every situation is so different, and we just try to take everything into place, and we also have to deal with and be aware of a grievance type procedure where it leaves our hands and goes to a label board who can overturn our decisions, so we have to be fair and consistent in our discipline, and if we're not, the officers have all the due process rights that everybody else has, and they can go through the process and we can be overturned, so we do try to be fair. We do try to be consistent, and our objective is curved to behavior and corrective behavior.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much.  
Linda Gathright, you have one minute.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Can you move to the next person and come back to me, please?

REVEREND PERKINS: Ray Rodriguez, one

minute.

RAY RODRIGUEZ: I'd like to make a statement also regarding the Nashua Police, and I really have to say that they have done an outstanding job in Nashua, and I've seen them in the community. Sergio and I have worked together. We've been on various task forces together. We've worked with various families together. We've worked with the kids out in the streets, and Sergio means what he says. He's out there, and he is out there doing the work and the rest -- I mean it's -- people are doing what they have to do and it's very difficult. It's extremely difficult as cultures are changing as people are having more demands and more sensitivities at the same time, but the issue of diversity and sensitivity -- and I don't want to use that word too much, "the issue of sensitivity." I think it's that we've got to really inundate our population and we really -- and I'm saying that the police department now. We really have to learn about our community. Really, really learn about the community people within the community and use the people that you have in the community as being, you know, a resource to you. Really use that community.

REVEREND PERKINS: Thank you very much.

Point well taken. Linda, one minute.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: It was about the officer's badges. Way back when, Bob, I think you established that people that felt they were being stopped for no reason at all and in most cases were not ticketed so there really is no concrete proof that you were stopped, and we have put out, the membership actually put a newsletter that they should take note of the officer's badge number or just directly ask the officer. Have you received any complaints, I'm going to say in the last year, around people complaining how the officer responded when they asked for that type of information?

CAPT. BAILEY: I'd like to address that complaint. I worked second shift, and generally the majority of the complaints like that come from second shift, and they all go through me. I'm in charge of the second shift uniform, and I have not received any complaints like that. Generally, to my knowledge, when an officer's asked for his name or badge number, they give it. That's somebody that they are told to do. It's not something you can hide. We wear them on your chest. our name is here and our number is here.

OFFICER HEBRA: We can't get out of the building without it.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: I agree, too. But for the most part when people are being stopped by an officer, they are not really, really looking at the officer because, number one, we already have this mind set.

CAPT. HODGES: One thing they might tell you to do is look for the unit number. There's a number on the cruiser, and we have that car assigned to a particular guy.

MR. HEBRA: As a cop on the street, not as an administrator, as these two are, we do stop -- as a matter of fact, I don't give enough tickets sometimes, and there may be an issue with my work product, but anyway, we do stop a lot of cars that it's just a stop. It's real quick. You may think you're driving fine but we see something, well, maybe this guy's impaired. Boom, we stop. It's a quick how are you doing, license and registration, how are you doing, all right, you're all set because obviously off that initial contact, the cop will determine right away I'm wasting my stop right. He might have been thinking about something, listening to the radio, swerved for whatever reason and the stop is terminated, and there's no documentation of that stop as far as the summons or a warning. It's have a good day and see you later. There are a lot of those. I know that for

a fact. We do that probably a little bit too much, and I don't know if that would be something that would ever been able to be addressed from the department. It's just the discussion that we're given that we don't have to document every stop that we make.

CAPT. HODGES: I just would like to say something. From a production type of standpoint, what our job is, our job is to keep people safe and we've gone from 1,700 DWIs a year to 500 in the last three years, so there's people's lives we're saving by doing that, and that's essentially more for motor vehicle stops, so that's an important factor. That's our job.

The other thing I will say is that if you are being stopped, and if you do want to make a complaint, don't want to give your name, you can do that. If we have an officer that's not acting appropriately out there, he's going to continue to do that, and we'll be able to develop a track record, and that's what this unit basically does.

LINDA GATHRIGHT: Thank you, and one more last thing. I just want to say thank you. I know after all the questions and the other things that I brought about, but I worked quite a bit with Bob Hodges through the years and I just want to say thank you on a personal note for your sincerity, let's put

it that way, to the community at large.

CAPT. HODGES: Thank you.

REVEREND PERKINS: And I have one, too, and then I'm going to turn over to Fernando, and I told him I would be brief. You all know how hard that is for me. I really need to say this, but Linda sort of said some things, and that is I live in the Tree Street area, work in the Tree Street areas. The kids that I deal with are multi-cultured. They're African American, they're Native American. They are white. They are Hispanics. They're Asian. They are whoever. They are the kids on the street, and I have come to appreciate the street officer in a way that I never have before because they have been to my house a whole lot of times in the last few months and have helped me and assisted me an awful lot with the kids that I deal with in trying to help them, and so my hat's off to them, and a very personal note to Bob whom we have worked together and the relationship that we have with them and the community and with the police, and I have to say this about Chief Largey because it's my belief about him -- I work with him on a one-to-one basis, and he comes to me and asks, "Is there a way that I can help you?" Sometimes even the officer on the street may disagree as to how we deal with the kids,

but I see that man talking about what we can do to turn around kids and what he feels about it and says that he's committed to trying to help and make a difference, so I just have to say that.

And yet on the other side are there problems? Of course there are. There are still some problems and we're still working with them, so that I want to say personally thank you.

MR. STEWART: One real quick question to you and to you, do you have any interface with the INS and does this -- years ago when I was involved with the same thing but in another city it came up, and it came up in the context of profile stops. Certain people are easier to ID by the INS than others, and I'm just wondering if there's any of that happening these days now here?

CAPT. HODGES: We deal quite a bit with the INS. I can tell you that I have never heard the word "profile stop." I've heard the word "profile stop." I've never heard it used by any of the officers that work for me. And Sergio is out on the street every day and I know he feels --

MR. STEWART: There was a question from out in this field and I just needed your answer.

OFFICER HEBRA: We were having a problem



down at the Pheasant Lane Mall regarding profile stops. We were having a problem down at the Pheasant Lane Mall with young teens going down there and fighting, car loads of kids fighting. That is a profile. You go down there, and you wait for these car loads of kids coming down. They get out of the vehicle, they hang around in a certain area, they don't go in the mall, they get back in the car, then they leave. We may stop them, contact them, ID them, find out what was their intentions, especially with the on-going disturbances that we've had down there those are the kinds of --

MR. STEWART: But it's nothing to do with the ethnicity that we're talking about?

OFFICER HEBRA: Immigration, the experience that I've had with immigration, they come into the city only whether they are looking to arrest an individual or deport an individual. They don't come out with us to ID people. They don't use us to do their dirty work, so to speak. I know they go to the district court regarding arraignments and whatnots. They may detain someone from that, put detainees on people. But as far as them coming out, driving around and stopping people, I've never seen that.

MR. STEWART: Having heard from Bertha and

others how progressive your department is, I too was distressed when I heard some of the things that were being said about alleged events involving lower echelon I think people, and I guess you'll be taking that home with you.

CAPT. HODGES: I have a lot of faith in the lower echelon people. I think the street officers -- and Sergio's an example of that. You cannot help but come away but being impressed listening to him. He's a guy that knows what's happening in the street and does a great job out there, and to tell you the truth, there's nobody that I would not want out in the street that worked for our department, but we handle 250,000 complaints a year, a quarter of a million complaints with 157 police officers, so that's quite a lot, and so day in, day out we deal with people. Are we bound to hit a segment of the population that's not happy with us? Yes, that's exactly what Captain Bailey was talking about, nature of the profession.

MR. HEBRA: We understand what the nature of our business is when someone's having a problem, we're going to get the phone call, we're going to have to go and deal with that person's problem and it's not pleasant. Putting handcuffs on someone -- I don't care how nice you do it, I don't care how polite you

are, that's not a very nice thing to see. It's not a very nice thing to be a part of. It can become extremely violent at any given moment and unfortunately that's part of the standard issue equipment that we received when we got sworn in. Unfortunately, that's the part of our job that we have to do, and I know people, when they see it being done, they see it on TV, they see it on the street, it's not a nice thing to see. It's not a nice thing to be a part of, and I know how people can be offended by it.

MR. SERPA: We are going to allow our court reporter a break.

(Recess)

MS. TAYLOR: I'll call your attention to the last statement. We'd like to have our last statement in this open session. Would you please come up and give us your name and make your statement?

CATHY RILEY: My name is Cathy Riley, and I'm not new to discrimination. I think all of us have been discriminated one time or another whether we're white, black, Chinese, Asian, and unfortunately it still continues, and it will continue until we in our home tell our children we need to learn how to love, be tolerant, accept each other with our faults, our feelings and come back full circle and support each

other and love each other.

I've heard many things today that I found very upsetting about what's going on right here in my own home town, but that doesn't surprise me. What does surprise me is that the kids here at the school don't have one person to go to designated just for them, either a mediator or an advocate who will stand beside them and go and address the issues for them. We all are weak. We all have faults. We all have feelings, but we all are good people. All of us want nothing but the best for ourself and for our children, and I guess when it comes right down to it, we can have all the multi-cultural awareness we want, but until we put God at the center of our lives and realize that we are nothing without God. We can't breathe, we can't move. We are nothing without him. In God we trust is on our money, and sometimes that's where it stays, and until such time we get to the point that we can truly believe in God we trust and have the family come back to the center and focal part, yes, even bringing our children to church, having them know that we believe in God, we believe in them only then will things improve. Thank you.

MS. TAYLOR: Thank you.

MR. SERPA: Are there any other statements?

Does anyone else wish to make a statement? I just want to say in conclusion that the transcripts of this proceeding of the whole day will be available in two weeks. They will go to our main office in Washington. We will review them.

The next process is we will send each person who testified their section of the transcript to review for any errors or omissions and send that back to us. Once we receive all of that, we will edit the transcript down into a manageable size with the highlights in it and issue that statement or that transcript with a summary of the proceedings today, what people said, what their recommendations were, what their concerns were, and we'll try to issue as soon as possible. Hopefully it will be of use to the local communities here as they are trying to work out these issues.

We are going to be moving on to other cities in New Hampshire to look at other issues. We'll be moving to Manchester I believe, Portsmouth and Northern New Hampshire, and when we complete all those cities, we'll issue a compilation of the entire record of civil rights in New Hampshire.

So the record is open for 30 days, so we invite anyone who was not able to make it here who

would like to submit a statement or any other documents for evidence, the record remains open for 30 days, and I can give you a number to call to reach me, for them to reach me, and that's in Washington. That's 202-376-7533. That's the office of Civil Rights. Fax number there is 202-376-7548. Yes, question?

MS. HOLMES: I would like to make a recommendation to the Committee. Since many of the testimonies that we mentioned today are personal issues related with the life of the people that was involved in this meeting, and since we are leaders in the community, personally I don't know if other testimonies agree with me, but I personally would like to ask confidentiality in terms of my name. You could use, of course, a woman, 31 years old like I am, resident in the City of Manchester and, etc., but I won't like to use my personal name, first of all.

Secondly, I would like to clarify that to the members or the participants of this meeting that it is essential for us to not discuss this in situations that are not proper. I would hate to see someone, oh, I'm sorry for what happened to you or in a supermarket or with my personal, you know, it's so painful that I will perhaps ask some kind of prudence

in a way that we are going to discuss the testimonies. I don't know perhaps how we can articulate better these statement. If you could help me. Perhaps I'm not requesting a confidentiality because I knew that if I came to this forum, I was, of course, going to be compiling with my story. But I perhaps request some kind of prudence and diligence in the way that we deal with this type of issues especially in public and my personal and professional life.

MR. SERPA: All the testimony and stories we've heard are going to be taken in general for a general theme that we're focusing on.

CAPT. HODGES: I guess the only comment I would like to make, and it's just for your behalf, is I know there were several reporters taking notes throughout all of the testimony. For whatever that's --

MR. HEBRA: There was at least two reporters. Confidentiality amongst us I don't think will be an issue, but when you have a reporter in an area -- I don't know unless maybe the Committee can make a statement to the newspaper and to Channel 9 News. They were here.

MS. HOLMES: Whatever happen from here is a learning experience, so, of course, I will suggest

that for future occasions the Commission provide guidelines in communication so that people, and especially the people that is going to provide testimony, knows in advance that the type of issues that they will be coping with.

RAY RODRIGUEZ: First, I'd like to say something. I don't think that you can have a public meeting at the Nashua Senior High School and ask for confidentiality from the news sources. I can't understand how that could even be asked because it can't be. I gave my name, whatever they do with it. I said what I said. It's what I thought I should say, but, hey, what I said is what I said.

I gave my name and I gave my address because I'm not afraid to stand up for what I said. But what I'm saying is you're not going to be able to say to the Nashua Telegraph or Leader, you can't put anything in here that we said because we said it, the police officers answered it. They did the best that they could. I'm giving them credit for it. I'm not saying that this is their fault, but what I'm saying is it can't be done. Not in the United States of America as far as I know it for 73 years.

MS. HOLMES: That's fine. I don't have any problem because what I said was the truth, but



hopefully we can incorporate that an important issue for future meetings.

MR. SERPA: We'll take that. All right. Any other questions?

DR. HOULIHAN: Please use my name because I want to be an example to other black women especially living up in the northern area.

MR. SERPA: I thank you for coming down from the northern areas.

MS. TAYLOR: I would like to thank all the committee members, Fernando for coming down from Washington. Would you please give him a hand? Thank God for allowing this to be possible for us to be able to bring our views together, to talk together to discuss the issues there at hand, knowing that everything will not be settled in one meeting, but we appreciate the opportunity for them to be voiced and gotten out on the table so that we can deal with them.

Special thanks to Nashua High School principals and all who were involved in allowing us to meet today, police and all of the panels that were here.

I also would like to acknowledge that Mr. Harvey Key did call. He wanted to be a part of this forum today, but due to death in his family he

was unable to. So we do expect to see him at the next forum. Thanks again, and we are now dismissed.

(Whereupon, at 4:39 p.m., the  
PROCEEDINGS were adjourned.)

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)  
COUNTY OF ESSEX )

I, Karyn J. Rei a Notary Public within and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, duly commissioned, qualified and authorized to administer oaths and to take and certify hearings, do hereby certify that heretofore, on the date cited above, the parties personally appeared before me at the above location and testified in the above-captioned matter; that thereupon the proceedings were taken down by me in machine shorthand at the time and place therein named and was reduced to typewriting thereafter.

I further certify that the said transcription constitutes a true record of the testimony given by the said witnesses.

I further certify that I am not interested in the event of this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand this 21st day of May 1999.

*Karyn J. Rei*

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

My Commission expires December 27, 2002.

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