



## Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood Community Meeting

### Summary of participant responses

A Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood community meeting held May 5 brought together some 200 people to learn key findings from a community assessment, hear recommendations for actions developed by six Promise Neighborhood Solution Action Groups, and share their ideas and reactions.

Participants were asked two questions: “What do you think is the most important next step to build the Promise Neighborhood and help every child to succeed?” and “What did you hear that excites you?” This is a summary of their responses.

#### ***Most important next steps***

Several themes emerged ranging from clarifying the purpose of the initiative, to increasing residents’ awareness and engagement, to identifying and implementing resources.

#### **Promise Neighborhood Initiative**

- Have a vision, develop goals, and break them into short-, medium-, and long-term.
- Raise expectations of parents and children.
- Define what quality is.
- Define governance.
- Understand motivation and education (parent and child) are essential to success.
- Ensure there is accurate information about community conditions.
- Learn from earlier programs; used evidence-based practices.
- Start with a pilot program to show early success.
- Define goals/activities of Promise Neighborhood with federal funding; and if no federal funding is obtained.

#### **The Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood**

is a community-wide effort to ensure all children succeed in school and life. With support from a federal grant and local funding, a new model of cradle-to-career support is being created to transform the way we meet kids’ needs by integrating rigorous high-quality in-school and out-of school learning time. The Promise Neighborhood encompasses a 250-block area in the Summit-University and Frogtown neighborhoods in Saint Paul.

#### **Communicate and increase awareness.**

- Have regular communications about Promise Neighborhood.
- Promote with banners on street signs, t-shirts, pins, bumper stickers.
- Start a PR campaign – e.g., pictures of babies with caps and gown.
- Engage people who wouldn’t/couldn’t come to meeting.
- Reach out through home visits, Facebook, churches, community events, booths at farmers markets, flyers to homes.

#### **Community trust, activities, and engagement**

- Hold community celebration/events to get to know each other.
- Engage youth, including those in Wilder programs.
- Plan community clean-ups by block.
- Take advantage of recreation centers for family and community involvement.
- Develop community volunteer programs (e.g., Big Brothers/Big Sisters)

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- Develop block clubs.
- Start a walking club.
- Have activities for older youth.
- Train people to work together. Have a way for residents to voice concerns.
- Give flip cameras to kids and ask them how for their ideas.
- Provide safe house for children if parents can't make it home on time.
- Fix unsafe park equipment.
- Run tours for residents of the community.
- Have rec centers plan activities in neighborhoods – go to where kids are.
- Have cross-cultural activities at rec centers, other gathering places.
- Have Concordia college kids mentor neighborhood kids.
- Host games, neighborhood talent show, music, food, etc.
- Utilize communities of faith and build relationships with police
- Work to engage more Hmong.

#### **Parent involvement**

- Encourage parent participation in schools, including visiting classrooms.
- Create school navigators and advocates for parents.
- Help parents and caregivers achieve their educational goals.
- Provide parent mentoring.
- Engage parents by going to their homes with resources, or even earlier with prenatal education and care.
- Make sure parent communication/education is culturally appropriate.

#### **Resources**

- Need more big businesses in Saint Paul to create jobs.
- Create jobs in the neighborhood, including youth employment opportunities.
- Need more affordable rental property.
- Provided income tax help.
- Provide rehab assistance to rehab vacant homes/upgrade homes for middle-income and low-income families.
- Create a hub (or several) of resources.
- Hire or provide stipends for 25 teachers who would bin in charge of parent education for 5 blocks.
- Make neighborhood agencies more useful.
- Help teachers live in the neighborhood so they are part of community.
- Develop community gardens where healthy food can be raised.
- Have list of free things to do.
- Provide access to technology for everyone.
- Develop block organizers for every block.
- Provide free access to community pools.
- Have a Circulator bus.
- Create welcome groups for people moving into the neighborhood
- Establish groups for parents of children with special needs.
- Bring EFCE-style programs into churches, other gathering places.

#### ***What did you hear that excites you?***

- So much community involvement and feedback.
- Proactive agenda.
- Positive plan and talking about strengths.
- Collaboration
- Pride
- Holistic approach.
- Empowerment of parents.
- Passion of Promise Neighborhood champions.
- Youth involvement.

For more information visit [www.wilder.org/promiseneighborhood.html](http://www.wilder.org/promiseneighborhood.html).  
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