

Milwaukee CORE - education committee
Press release Jan. 12, 1964

The Milwaukee chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) is very concerned over recent statements in the Milwaukee Journal made by School Superintendent Vincent. His comments implying he will continue to carry out existing programs without considering the many proposed changes brought out in recent Board hearings shows a basic lack of understanding of the racial segregation problems in Milwaukee schools. Without waiting for the results of the Board's Special Committee on Equality of Educational Opportunity hearings, he has expressed an unwillingness to even consider needed changes. CORE feels Superintendent Vincent's statement that the present bussing policy of self contained classes "is flexible and educationally sound" is not only untrue, but shows an inflexibility to take an objective look at this policy. His refusal to accept policy changes on the grounds that it will cause "an organizational nightmare" is an unproven and weak excuse to avoid taking any action to end school segregation. The Milwaukee CORE chapter feels that the integration of bussed students into receiving schools will cause no added expense or administrative difficulty, and will benefit all children, Negro and white.

There will be a public workshop of segregation in education at the next regular CORE meeting, January 19, 7:30PM, at St. James Methodist Church, 11th and Brown sts.

Milwaukee Sentinel called 1/12 - L. VanDyke
Milwaukee Journal " 1/13

Education Committee - workshop
January 19, 1964

Questions to be asked by CORE member posing as an un-interested inner core parent of a school child.

1. What is the problems with the Milwaukee schools? I have no complaints.
2. My children enjoy the bussing. They don't complain about it.
3. I want my child home for lunch. I can feed him cheaper here than at the school lunch program.
4. I don't really care if my kids are integrated into schools or not. My children have Negro friends who live in this area. Why disrupt their regular classes and friendships?
5. My children are not really interested in schooling. My son wants to be a mechanic. Why should I worry about college preparation, or better curriculum for him when he needs just shop training?
6. They have vocational training at my son's high school. I have heard no complaints of poor quality instruction.
7. My family just moved to Milwaukee a year ago, and I think the schools are much better here. I am glad I have my children in these better schools.
8. I think your whole school project is a waste of time. The kids I know are just not interested in higher education. I think they are satisfied with their schools.
9. Well, if there are faults with the inner core schools, what could one parent do about it?
10. I am not the type who joins organizations or groups. I am sorry, but I don't like to waste time at meetings, talks and other boring gatherings.
11. I think you have some good points, but I just don't have time to join groups. You should talk with the woman next door, though, she might be able to hep with your project.

Report of special meeting, Milwaukee CORE
education committee

January 12, 1964

In attendance, about 25 CORE members, and parents.

A general discussion by parents concerning their views on the problems, and especially their attitudes toward the inner core school problems:

1. general concern was expressed on the class time lost during the lunchtime bussing of children between schools.
2. The inconvenience and disruption of school day routine disturbs children's study.
3. One parent told that her child didn't want to be bussed because of the receiving school's unfriendly attitudes toward Negro children.
4. Two excellent examples were given by parents to show the inferior position of Negro schools in Milwaukee compared to other large cities:
 - a) one parent said that when she lived in Pittsburg, she observed and knew that the schools there were doing a better job in educating children than here in Milwaukee.
 - b) another mother told of a visit by a friend from California, who had a child (Negro) in the same grade as her own daughter. The girl from California was far advanced in her education - she had been taught subjects and material not yet offered in the comparable grade in Milwaukee.
5. A number of parents discussed the fact, which seems to be common knowledge in the inner core, that white parents have no trouble getting transfers for their children, while Negro's have much difficulty, or are constantly refused. One case was brought out where in the same school district, a white mother got her child transferred almost immediately, and a Negro parent trying for a transfer had to fight 4 years to get the same thing.
6. When the issue of inadequate academic preparation was brought up, a number of parents immediately agreed, and expressed concern over their children's future ability to advance, and get satisfactory jobs when they graduate, due to the inferior education received in the core schools. It was pointed out that many cases, the schools offer a curriculum that is insufficient, and that the level of instruction is so low, that many Negro children with higher educational ambitions are even prevented from entering the state's own university - UWM, because of failure to pass the entrance exams because of their faulty elementary and secondary education in Milwaukee.
7. A general discussion followed on the parents responsibility to take an active interest in their children's schooling. A general feeling prevailed that far too many inner core parents are not aware of the serious flaws in their public schools, and far too many are content to sit back and see their children receive a poor education.
8. The illogic of the School Board's location of receiving schools was discussed. Some parents could not see why children were bussed across town to another school, when much nearer schools were available.

The education committee discussed the following courses of action for the near future:

1. CORE members have been assigned to check on bussing - the numbers presently bussed, location of sending and receiving schools, and especially to observe the treatment received by Negro children bussed into predominantly white schools.
2. The cost of lunch programs was discussed - and the possibility of demanding that the School Board quit bussing children at noon, and use the money that had been spent on this noontime bussing to pay the lunch program cost for children the transferred students.
3. The committee chairman again stressed that not only is CORE demanding integration of lunch and activities periods (including recess), but especially important is the mixing and integrating of the transferred students into the regular classes of the receiving school.
4. The committee distributed an information sheet-questionnaire to be distributed to some parents, to get them aware of what CORE is doing on the school desegregation campaign, and to have them return the small blank at the bottom of the page to give us a list of willing parents to help work on the campaign.