

Separate Together?
Working Group Session 1 (September 25, 2008) Notes

Panel Members:

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In the beginning of Boston HERC, 90% of students participating in the program came from churches, and a large percentage from the host church. Today, fewer than 10% of the participants come from churches.

BUYF has been working with schools and with youth in various capacities. BUYF has 'scholarshipped' kids to parochial schools, and sometimes the schools are not ready for the kids or the kids are not ready for the schools. As of 2002, there are 52 BUYF alumni who have graduated from college, 2 in law school, and 42 currently in college.

The Charles Street Roxbury Renaissance Center is in early stages of creating new programs and formalizing programs that have been in schools in various stages for years. It has a relationship with the King Middle School that started when a King faculty and Charles Street member began an after-school program to teach music. Various auxiliaries in the church acted as mentors or donated school supplies. It has evolved and now consists of instrumental lessons and a joint chorus between King students and Charles Street AME youth after a grant written by Boston Arts Academy student and Charles Street member Gerami Groover was accepted.

Learned ideas from this conversation:

1. The need for gatekeeper relationships (these are relationships where there is a liaison between the church and the school)
2. Relationships with principal is most important
 - a. Agreement on the purpose of your being there
 - b. No disagreement on methodology
 - c. Written documents help with expectations and transitions between leadership
3. Churches need to be clear about what they are trying to accomplish in the schools (Are they meeting a need for the school or the church?)
4. Churches need to create resources
5. Pastors or youth leaders should communicate with schools about their student members.
6. The cultures of schools and the cultures of churches are unique and different, so relationship-building that is done with youth must also be done with schools.
7. Getting parents involved might be accomplished by educating them or providing support for them to participate in their children's education (transportation, daycare, visitations, sitting in on meetings)