Community Needs Assessment
Education Sector
February 9, 2011
4:30-6:30pm, Orcas Fire Hall

Attending: Rachel Adams, Marilyn Anderson, Janet Brownell, Teresa Chocano, Margie Doyle, Paul Freedman, Kyle Freeman, Jean Henigson, Dylan Holmes, Barbara Kline, Catherine Laflin, Suzanne McClure, Jill Sherman, Barb Skotte, Susan Stolmeier, Nancy Wrightsman. Diane Berreth, Lance Evans, Moana Kutsche, and Kate Long attended from OICF.

Central Themes: Education Sector
- Lack of adequate and centralized resources for meeting basic needs of children and their families
- Lack of community and schools' knowledge, trust and shared understanding of current conditions in all our schools and with our students
- Insufficient resources for providing educational opportunities beyond the basic core

What is Working? (All)
- How well kids and educators know each other as people
- Options available on island; various schools and educational options are important
- √ Diversity of educational options and staff/techniques
- √ Professionalism of people in preschools; how well everyone works together
- Public school ability to be open-minded and adaptive to populations. This was not true 10 years ago.
- Mix of teachers available to students.
- [Public school] Writing program is working
- The support of the community of a fluctuating population and diversity of needs
- √ √ Generosity of community with time and money; without which we would have a failing institution.
- We make sure our kids finish. It is a community effort, but we make sure our kids graduate and finish.
- All schools are child-centric as opposed to institution-centric.
- Outcome driven—there are many opportunities for kids—rich programs; synergy of community and staff.
- Choice and diversity of program offerings.

Community Needs Assessment
Education Sector

- Consistent depth of caring and dedication to education and each family
- Creativity of educators
- Music in the schools; tremendous drive and enthusiasm for music and music programs.
- Contrast of offerings and programs.

Question #:1 What Community Needs Are Not Being Met?
Group 1 (Moana's group)

- Pre-school: insufficient help with/resources for transitions (especially for ELL) to public school ● ●
- Lack of programs for highly capable students, especially at elementary level (Public School)
- Lack of summer programming for special ed, ELL or at-risk students—academic and life skills
- Lack of housing options for kids without stable homes—need for both shelter and family stability ● ● ● ●
- Lack of continuity with arts education; concerns regarding stability of leadership and funding● ● ● ● ●
- Need better connection of community to schools
- Lack of adequate facilities, specifically public school
- Lack of adequate and central resources for strengthening families
    - Food bank, information food stamps, family resource center, especially for families dealing with poverty (+55% at elementary school). ● ● ● ● ●
- Way to connect art and music resource peoples from community to preschool-12
- Too few concerned, involved parents, particularly at public school. This can result in children acting out, which is disruptive. High level of family stress ● ●
- Lack of transition opportunities for special ed kids – lack of time
- Lack of stable funding for specialized programs and classes—highly capable, advanced classes, art, CTE, foreign language, summer programs for ELL and special ed. ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Non-adversarial community [parent-school?] meetings; meetings are problem oriented rather than establishing cooperation ●
- No public funding for continuity with Montessori School from pre-k and kindergarten into public school
- No foreign language k-8
- No stable funding for elementary school counselor
- Lack of offerings—classes
- Lack of community resources for families dealing with issues of poverty ● ● ●

Prioritized Listing of Unmet Needs:
1. Lack of stable funding for specialized programs (highly capable, arts, CTE, foreign language, summer programs for special education, and ELL).

2. Lack of centralized and adequate resources for strengthening families, especial poverty (+55% in elementary school). (Tied with #3)
3. Lack of continuity in arts programs—specifically, leadership, funding, community connections. (Tied with #2)
4. Housing for kids without stable homes

Community Needs Assessment
Education Sector

Question #:1 What Community Needs are Not Being Met?
Group 2 (Lance's group)
- Community doesn't always see clearly needs of school
- Lack of social services/safety net for students and families (includes housing, family literacy) ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Lack of synergy/coordination between educational institutions
- Lack of support/services for family literacy
- Lack of a safer place to "hang out" after school ●
- Lack of safe places for HS students to live
- Lack of educational opportunities for trade skills ● ● ● ● ●
- Community doesn't trust that the needs for the schools are _true_ needs
- Disconnect between "haves" and "have nots" and only connect with self interest
- People/parents do not value education
- Lack of centralized communication with non-English speaking family (translation) _Even_ lack of awareness translation is needed ● ● ● ●
- Lack of adequate curricular materials ($)
- Lack of opportunities for teachers to interact with community and each other ● ●
- Unwillingness by some community to appreciate change ● ● ● ●
- Isolation of teachers, students, parents
- Continuing adult education ($) on island not accessible
- Libraries wasted opportunity
- Lack of trust and isolation from schools = disconnect from school needs and values ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Prioritized listing of unmet needs (group 2):
1. Lack of social services/safety net for students and families (includes housing, family literacy)
2. Lack of synergy/coordination between educational institutions
3. Lack of a safer place to "hang out" after school
4. Lack of educational opportunities for trade skills
5. Disconnect between "haves" and "have nots" and only connect with self interest
6. Lack of centralized communication with non-English speaking family (translation) even lack of awareness translation is needed
7. Lack of opportunities for teachers to interact with community and each other
8. Unwillingness by some community to appreciate change
9. Continuing adult education ($) on island not accessible

10. Lack of trust and isolation from schools = disconnect from school needs and values

Question #2: Primary Causes of Unmet Needs
Group 1 (Moana's group)
- Lack of info in the broad community on extent of needs—poverty, homelessness
- Parenting education needs
- Isolation from mainland services
- Difficulty of connecting nonprofits—fragmentation
- Fragmentation of people—geography, socio-economic
- Small schools, no/few other schools to collaborate with
- Time constraints—teacher/kids/families
- Isolation from other services and programs and resources
- Fragmentation among on-island organizations and people
- Facilities, personnel issues (re: lack of stable funding for programs)
- No respite resources established for kids and parents in conflict
- No place to go for kids without stable families
- Troubled kids are a challenge to bring to a home; there is a need for trained, qualified providers

Group 2 (Lance's group)
1. Unwillingness to give up power/social real estate to solve problem
- Money
- We're too small
- We have an orchestra—but children are hungry at school—priorities vs. personal self interest
2. Class system and time
   - Nostalgic ideas about school (…when I went to school in a tent…why should this change?)
   - Education = youth in a retirement community
   - Community doesn't see schools as an asset
   - Isolation (geographically and philosophically) and lack of interest in schools
3. Money and Facilities
   - Unappreciated value of vocational education
   - Size of enrollment
4. New = threat
5. Growth-fast growing Spanish-speaking population-and desire not to notice
   - Trained bilingual professionals

Core Learnings from Today (All)
- Concerns are not so different from other attendees [?]
- √ Importance and need for centralized services
- "Community" is very strong—we have same interests
- Kids couch-surfing (not having a place to live) is a surprise; the community needs to know
- +50% poverty in elementary Public School—staggering
- √ √ While we may emphasize differences, we are a community with like values
- We have a goal to create a civilized society, characterized by music and arts, among other things, but we need to work on basic needs
- √ it is difficult to hear that the safety of our students is not being met
- Similarities of ideas here
- Need to discuss poverty issue,e.g., public school is thelargest food bank on island
- Tremendous support from many avenues; amazing opportunities
- Community in crisis—we need to communicate this to the wider community and work on addressing it
- Where there's a will there's a way (with respect to community in crisis)
- Appreciative of this group and discussion
- "Reality check" re: poverty levels, couch-surfing