Symbiosis between Government and Community:
Community Attachment, Trust, and Willingness to Pay

Fifth Transatlantic Dialogue
"The Future of Governance in Europe and the U.S."
Washington, D.C.
June 2009

Workshop 1

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As fiscal challenges intensify it becomes increasingly important to find ways of systematically and strategically applying public and community resources to answer these concerns. This research argues that citizens should be viewed as assets and that public agencies must aggressively enlist their support in building sustainable communities through symbiosis between government and community. Information and public understanding of these concerns and the governments that serve them is critical if citizens are to become coproducers of better communities (Ho, 2007; Holzer, Melitski, Rho & Schwester, 2004; Simonson & Robbins, 2003). Unfortunately, all too often government has limitations dictated by asymmetric relationships with citizens (Thomas, 1998). Symbiosis requires trust and symmetrical relations between citizens and government including the flow of information. This research uses the case of urban public education and empirical evidence gathered from more than 5,000 citizens to explore how symbiotic relationships between government and community might be promoted to enhance community capacity and support for a strategic agenda that optimizes the use of resources based on sustainable community. While any number of functional areas could be used to illuminate the concerns and opportunities advanced here, the case of public education is particularly fitting since it is instrumental to the creation of opportunity and is a basic and shared concern of the entire community.

Overview: The Conceptual Framework for Symbiosis

This paper develops a conceptual framework that gives meaning to community as it applies to the interface between citizens and government. This conceptual framework involves two forms of community, a more traditional form of community organized around neighborhoods and socio-geographic space and a construct referred to as "relational community". Relational community includes three dimensions: the paradox between community

and self-interest, intergenerational equity, and social equity. The construct of "trust" is also integral to this conceptual framework. Trust focuses on bridging the divide between citizens and government. It is operationalized to include two forms, "demonstrated" and "performance-based" trust. Demonstrated trust is the extent to which citizens feel that they have had a hand in defining public priorities and that public agencies have demonstrated that investments are consistent with priorities. Performance-based trust focuses on the extent to which citizens feel that government is investing tax dollars in ways that promote civil society, improve the labor force, promote equity, and maximize return on public investment.

The model examined here assumes that a symbiotic relationship between community and government can be built that encourages coproduction through socio-geographic community while strengthening relational community. Relational community is strengthened through interactive processes between citizens and government that encourage both to rise above self-interest and to behave in ways that are consistent with sustainable community. Symbiosis between community and government stimulated by collaborative processes and citizen engagement strengthens commitment to community and at the same time potentially strengthens trust between citizens and government. The use of community resources is optimized when investments in community by citizens are applied in concert with public investments guided by a community-based strategic agenda. Given the magnitude of the challenges faced by the United States and Europe, systems approaches to these concerns must be applied in concert with new tax dollars. This conceptual framework assumes that citizens become more willing taxpayers as their connection to community strengthens and when they can trust that their tax dollars are being invested in the long-term well-being of community. Therefore, the test of the conceptual framework for symbiosis hinges on willingness to pay taxes. Willingness to pay includes an

overall assessment, payment to compensate for economic disadvantage, and taxes used to fund facilities and services that extend beyond basic service delivery.

Relational Community

Relational community is comprised of three dimensions: the paradox between community and self-interest, intergenerational equity, and social equity. The paradox is formed from basic assumptions about human behavior featuring the struggle that takes place inside each human being pitting community well-being against self-interest. Wheatly and Kellner-Rogers (1998) describe this paradoxical struggle as the need to affiliate, defined here as community, versus competing needs to distinguish oneself as an individual who is motivated by self-interest. Those who retreat into self-interest by placing disproportionate value on personal well- being are essentially setting limits on their responsibility to sustainable community (Frederickson, 1982; Rose, 2000). Conversely, those who embrace community by exhibiting a greater degree of selflessness are more likely to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of others. The paradox between community and self-interest forms the core of the construct of relational community.

Research focusing primarily on the paradoxical dimension of relational community argues that there are a number of contributors to or detractors from relational community. However, actions on the part of government are thought to be a particularly important influence on whether citizens retreat into self-interest. The paradox is not confined to how individuals see themselves but also includes expectations or anticipated behavior on the part of others (Yang, 2005). In other words, people are more willing to make personal sacrifices for the broader good if they feel that others are likely to behave similarly. Previous research indicates that most citizens believe that they have the capacity to rise above self-interest but do not trust that their

fellow citizens will behave similarly. Those who have confidence in themselves but lack confidence in others are generally considered to be partially attached to community. This research assumes that behavior on the part of government is intertwined with behavior exhibited by citizens. Therefore, when local government leads, through behavior focused on the well-being of community, citizens are more likely to follow. Conversely, if government uses public dollars to respond to the demands of narrow bands of self-interest, citizens have a propensity to respond by retreating into self-interest (Glaser, Aristigueta & Payton, 2000; Glaser, Parker & Payton, 2001). John Nalbandian cautions local government managers about this rising tide of self-interest, "Those who come to our governing institutions seeking satisfaction of their private interests always find ways to mask those interest[s] as the public good." (Nalbandian, 1999: 195).

An important test of the proposed conceptual framework for promoting symbiosis between government and community focuses on connections between relational community and willingness to pay. Previous research indicates that those who resolve the paradoxical tug of war by retreating into self-interest tend to be less willing taxpayers, because taxes interfere with personal consumption. Conversely, those who value community tend to be more willing to make personal sacrifices required of taxpayers (Glaser, Aristigueta & Miller, 2003-4). Public education must be viewed as an investment in societal well-being where investors from one segment of the community rise above their immediate self-interest by supporting investments that directly benefits another segment of the community. The success of public education depends on a broad base of taxpayers who are willing to support the education of other peoples' schoolchildren. Less than 24 percent of the households responding to this survey have schoolchildren who attend the urban public school district that is the focus of this research. If the

more than three-quarters of the taxpayers who do not directly benefit from investment in public education resist taxation, public education will no longer be viable.

There is a growing body of research that seeks to better understand taxpayers and willingness to pay taxes (Arrington & Jordan, 1982; Beck et al., 1987; Donahue & Miller, 2008; Donahue, Robbins, and Simonsen 2008; Ebdon & Franklin, 2004; James & John, 2006; Simonsen & Robbins, 1999). Understanding willingness to pay is important for a number of reasons but one of the most important reasons is insight gained about public investment priorities. Establishing validity as it relates to the measurement of the construct of willingness to pay presents unique challenges. It is one thing to indicate willingness to pay as a respondent to a survey and quite another to vote for a public referendum that increases taxes. This research uses measures of willingness to pay that are similar to those employed in an earlier study of public education whose measures were found to have predictive validity. More specifically, measures associated with an earlier survey indicated a willingness to pay increased taxes, and these findings were confirmed when registered voters (2000) overwhelming supported the passage of a school bond referendum for $244.5 million. Similarly, evidence associated with this study confirms that measures of willingness to pay are accurate predictors as witnessed by the passage of a second school bond referendum (November 2008) for $340 million. This showing of willingness to pay is especially important in that it comes during a period of considerable economic stress.

The second dimension of relational community builds heavily on the work of H. George Frederickson who has long argued that public administrators are instrumental to the advancement of social equity. Thirty-five years ago, Frederickson (1974) raised concerns about unequal distribution of wealth. He argues that social equity constitutes a dimension of performance and

that public administrators have an obligation to promote equal opportunity in much the same way that they strive to advance other dimensions of performance. Frederickson (1999) gives credit to the public bureaucracy for progress in the advancement of social equity. In spite of these advancements, Frederickson (2005) argues that there is reason for concern about the growing divide between advantaged and disadvantaged citizens. Frederickson develops a cogent argument that public administrators cannot force public support for a social equity agenda but must, instead, exhibit "moral leadership" that promotes understanding of the plight of disadvantaged citizens.

This research measures support for a social equity agenda through a variety of items that essentially ask citizens to define community responsibility for making sure that schoolchildren get the assistance they need for academic success (see Note 1). In this case, social equity includes socio-economic disadvantage as well as educational deficits of unknown origins. Further, social equity as it is defined here includes assistance to educationally advanced students and accelerated learning. Ultimately, the retention and attraction of advantaged schoolchildren is instrumental to the restoration of the tax base. Urban schools must provide educational opportunities that promote learning for all classes of students, maximizing educational opportunity for gifted and disadvantaged students alike.

At least 65 percent of the more than 49,000 schoolchildren who attend the urban school district examined here are poor or near-poor. As the percentage of low-income children rises and urban public schools become disproportionately poor, the mismatch between who pays and who directly benefits potentially sets the stage for disownment. In response to these concerns, social equity is included as a dimension of relational community. Research focusing exclusively on social equity provides evidence that those who support a social equity agenda are more willing to

pay increased taxes to advance that agenda. Findings associated with this social equity research indicates that support for a social equity agenda is not always driven by an intimate understanding of the challenges faced by disadvantaged schoolchildren (Glaser, Hildreth & Bannon, 2009). As a result, it is difficult to predict just how stable this support for social equity is. The relational community index created here includes a weighted version of social equity.

The third dimension of relational community focuses on intergenerational equity, the extent to which government and the citizens it serves are willing to make personal sacrifices that advance the well-being of future generations. Intergenerational responsibility is an important distinction between business and government. Frederickson (1994) advises government to evaluate its behavior and to knowingly act to equitably distribute burden and benefit between today's and tomorrow's citizens.

Intergenerational equity as it is operationalized here borrows from the logic of the paradox. First, much like the paradox, citizens are asked to make a self assessment of the extent to which they can make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. Second, individuals are asked about anticipated behavior on the part of their fellow citizens. Are most people willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations? Those who think that neither they nor their fellow citizens are willing to act in ways that preserve the future are expected to be less likely to support an agenda where today's tax dollars are used to secure the future of the community. Conversely, those who have confidence that they and their fellow citizens stand ready to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations are expected to be more likely to support the investment of tax dollars in schools and schoolchildren today to preserve the future.

How intergenerational concerns are handled has much to do with the strength and sustainability of relational community. If public education and the communities it serves are to prosper, the current generation must be willing to invest in schoolchildren that constitute the next generation. This research builds on and uses parallel definitions of relational community (including measures of intergenerational equity) much like those used in an earlier study of community-based health care. This health care study found that citizens were surprisingly willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. The overall results from this study also found that citizens with a strong commitment to relational community were more willing taxpayers (Glaser et al., 2007).

Socio-Geographic Community

Socio-geographic community organized around neighborhoods is sometimes used by local government to engage citizens in the decisions of local government. Neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations (NBOs) can also be used to encourage coproduction with citizens joining with government to improve neighborhoods (Berry, Portney, and Thomson, 1993: 189; Bolland & McCallum, 2002; Thomas, 1992). In some cases, community policing, acting as an agent of local government, is used to bridge the divide between citizens and government and to advance public safety through coproduction (Glaser & Denhardt, forthcoming). Neighborhoods form the building blocks of community when citizens join with government to coproduce neighborhood improvement (Glaser & Denhardt, 2006). While socio-geographic community can be a powerful tool for organizing and applying the resources of community, it can also fragment, with neighborhoods becoming "civic cocoons" driven by competing forms of self-interest (Benest, 1996).

Some of the early research relevant to relational community but more narrowly focused on the paradox provides insight about the relationship between socio-geographic and relational community. Concerns about socio-geographic isolation are particularly important as they apply to neighborhood schools. Previous research provides evidence that individuals who are attached to neighborhood but detached from community, as defined by the paradox, are more likely to hold negative views of government. Conversely, this same research also provides evidence that those who are attached to both socio-geographic and relational community are more likely to hold positive views of government, including satisfaction with local government service delivery, and are more likely to join with government to coproduce community improvement (Glaser, Aristigueta & Payton, 2000).

The conceptual framework advanced here tests for connections between relational and socio-geographic community to better understand the extent to which neighborhoods and neighborhood schools potentially fragment community. This research uses a series of items (see Note 2) to better understand commitment to neighborhood and neighborhood schools and then tests the strength of the connection between socio-geographic and relational community to better understand the challenges associated with building symbiotic relationship between government and community.

Trust

Much like relational community, trust of government is assumed to be an interactive and dynamic process that potentially contributes to or detracts from symbiosis between government and community. Actions on the part of government taken to build relational community, including demonstrations it is capable of rising above self-interest, are expected to strengthen trust (Ruscio, 1996; Ruscio, 2004). Conversely, gains in trust are expected to positively

contribute to relational community. Trust, as it is defined here, includes two forms, demonstrated and performance-based trust.

Demonstrated trust focuses on the extent to which government engages the community, frames and informs public debate, develops and implements solutions consistent with identified values, and publically demonstrates that government has invested public resources as promised. Yang (2005) argues that building trust between citizens and government not only involves changes in how citizens see government but also includes changes in how government sees citizens. Approximately ten years ago, the school district examined here, under the leadership of a new superintendent, broke with tradition by aggressively engaging the community, including households without schoolchildren. The intent was to promote community ownership of public schools and to build trust between citizens and government. A large citizen survey, the predecessor to the survey examined here, was used to open public dialogue between citizens and government. The first stage of this citizen engagement process culminated with the passage of a bond referendum that supported investment in public school facilities. The survey evidence examined here builds on this earlier survey research by articulating how the school district used the resources associated with the first bond referendum. An index of demonstrated trust was operationalized through nine questionnaire items ("Approval Rating: How Your Bond Money Has Been Invested") which asked the respondent to indicate their level of approval for how their tax dollars have been spent (Notes Section 4). Presumably, those who support how the public dollars have been spent are more likely to feel that government has demonstrated its trustworthiness.

Performance-based trust as it is defined here focuses on the extent to which citizens feel that their tax dollars are being invested in ways that bring positive returns to the community.

Normative definitions of public school effectiveness hinge on the extent to which schoolchildren become contributing members of civil society and productive members of the local labor force. Public education is also expected to be instrumental in the creation of opportunity for schoolchildren. Isabel Sawhill (2006) refers to public education as the "great leveler" and argues that urban public schools face a particularly daunting challenge in that they must overcome societal inequity. The problems of society are converging in urban public schools, and the burden on educators grows as the societal divide between "haves" and "have nots" widens (Frederickson, 1990; Frederickson, 2005; Wong, 1994). Finally, the performance-based trust index includes an assessment of efficiency, the extent to which public dollars invested in urban education bring the best possible education for the tax dollars invested.

Research provides evidence that citizens who feel that a public agency has demonstrated that it can be trusted and who trust that the agency has the capacity to perform are more likely to be willing taxpayers (Holzer and Zhang 2004; Yang & Holzer, 2006). The conceptual framework advanced here assumes that public leaders who build and strengthen the connections between trust and relational community are more likely to promote symbiosis between government and community. The findings reported here test for the strength of connections between trust, community, and the willingness of taxpayers to pay for public goods and services necessary to sustain community. This understanding will help public leaders better understand how their leadership and the behavior of public agencies are instrumental to the formation and prosperity of collaborative networks that systematically apply community and public resources.

Research Methods

The urban educational institution examined here is located in a metropolitan area with a population of a half-million people. The urban public school system serves more than 49,000

schoolchildren and is surrounded by economically advantaged suburban communities and schools. Approximately 65 percent of the students served by the urban school system are receiving free or reduced priced lunches, which is, in some cases, six times the percentage of economically disadvantaged students found in surrounding suburban schools.

This research used a proportional stratified random sample of 22,000 registered voters who voted in the last election. The strata are organized around six board of education districts. We also sent questionnaires to 100 percent of the households (3,366) with registered voters who lived in six precincts with concentrated poverty and persons of color. A follow-up reminder was mailed approximately one week after the initial mailing. An estimated 10 percent of the mailed surveys (2,533) never reached their destination because of inaccuracies in the voter registration list. Ninety-eight of the returned surveys are not included in the analysis because of concerns about reliability associated with large numbers of missing values. Approximately 5,684 households or approximately 25 percent responded to the survey.

Findings

We begin by operationalizing the paradox between community and self-interest and then add definition to the construct of relational community through measures of intergenerational and social equity. With one exception (Glaser, et al., 2007), the research associated with the study of relational community has been limited to the paradox between community and self-interest. The paradox assumes that behavior is driven in part by how individuals see themselves in combination with how they see others. Table 1 reflects this paradoxical tension, with slightly more than a quarter (attached: 26.0%) of the respondents reporting that they have confidence in their capacity and the capacity of most citizens to put community interest above personal interest. Conversely, nearly 35 percent (detached: 34.5%) report that neither they nor their

fellow citizens have the capacity to rise above personal interest to promote the well-being of community. Consistent with previous research, the largest class of citizens (37.1%) are characterized as partially attached. They feel that they have the capacity to put community interests above personal interests but lack confidence that most citizens are prepared to behave similarly. Generally, then, it is assumed that behavior is driven by how we see ourselves in combination with how we see others. Therefore, we are reluctant to make personal sacrifices to sustain community if we do not anticipate similar behavior on the part of others.

Building on the logic of the paradox, intergenerational equity constitutes the second dimension of relational community (Table 1). As discussed earlier, there is growing recognition that the actions of government are instrumental to sustainable community. Much like the paradox, intergenerational equity first asks citizens about their willingness to make personal sacrifices to preserve the future, and then citizens are asked to speculate on the anticipated behavior of their fellow citizens. Interestingly, nearly 43 percent (42.6%) have confidence that both they and their fellow citizens are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. Nearly forty percent (39.6%) of the respondents report having confidence in themselves but doubt that most people are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. Approximately 16 percent (15.9%) of the responding citizens argue that neither they nor are most people willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. These findings provide evidence that, much like earlier health related research (Glaser et al., 2007), citizens show a predisposition towards public agendas that advance the well-being of the next generation. Of course, schools and public education are instrumental to creating opportunity for the next generation.

Table 1
Relational Community Attachment: Paradox and Intergenerational Equity

Paradox: Community & Self-Interest	I am willing to put community interests above personal interests			
Most people are willing to put community interests above personal interests***	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Detached		Partial	
Strongly Disagree	03.6	03.5	03.1	00.6
Disagree	01.4	26.0	31.0	02.4
Agree	00.2	02.1	21.8	02.8
Strongly Agree	00.0	00.1	00.4	01.0
			Attached	

Intergenerational Equity	I am willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations			
Most people are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations***	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Detached		Partial	
Strongly Disagree	02.1	01.4	02.7	01.0
Disagree	01.0	11.4	32.5	03.4
Agree	00.2	01.7	35.1	05.2
Strongly Agree	00.0	00.1	00.5	01.8
			Attached	

***Significance p≤.001; Range of N= 5392-5407

Social equity, the third dimension of relational community, builds on the foundation provided by H. George Frederickson (1974, 1990, 2005) and others (Brintnal, 2008; Glaser, Hildreth & Bannon, 2009; O'Kelly & Dubnick, 2005; Rice, 2008; Wise, 1990), who argue that public administrators have a responsibility to advance a social equity agenda that addresses the growing societal divide between "haves" and "have nots." Seven items found in the first section of the notes (Note 1) operationalize social equity. The four items reported in Table 1 (paradox and intergenerational equity) are combined with the social equity items (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .882) to form a more comprehensive definition of relational community. It is important to note that social equity is proportionally weighted giving it the same weight as the paradox and intergenerational equity (Note 1).

Analysis of variance (Table 2, ANOVA) is used to test for differences in commitment to relational community by race. African-Americans are more likely to be economically disadvantaged, and, therefore, self-interest dictates a stronger commitment to relational community, or, at least, the social equity component of relational community. Findings indicate that African-Americans are statistically, but not substantially, more likely to register stronger relational community readings. Lower-income households are also expected to exhibit stronger support for relational community. In contrast to expectations, low-income households are statistically no more likely to embrace relational community than are the economically advantaged. Nor does commitment to relational community seem to have important connections to age. Households who currently have schoolchildren attending urban public schools potentially stand to gain from a public agenda emphasizing relational community. In spite of potential sources of self-interest, households with urban schoolchildren are statistically but not substantially more likely to support a relational community agenda. Overall, there is little evidence that differences in commitment to relational community are driven in any important way by the forms of self-interest examined here. As a result, these items do not offer rival explanations for variation in relational community and the conceptual framework for symbiosis advanced here.

Socio-geographic community or neighborhoods can form the building blocks of community or alternatively they can fragment the community encouraging civic isolation. Symbiotic relationships within and between forms of community are important for optimization in the use of limited resources. Public support for socio-geographic community is measured through six items (Note 2) that form an index (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .904; Range of Scores= 6-24) measuring citizen support for neighborhood schools. Socio-geographic

community index scores are the second item in each of the four sections found in Table 2. ANOVA results (Table 2) indicate that African-Americans and the youngest households are slightly less committed to socio-geographic community. In contrast to expectations, ANOVA results (Table 2) indicate no important differences in commitment to socio-geographic community based on household income. However, results do reveal differences between subpopulations based on age.

Table 3 provides both zero order (below diagonal) and partial correlations controlling for age (above diagonal) and Figure 1 provides a graphic summary of the zero order correlations. Partial correlations indicate that age does not offer a rival explanation for the zero order correlations reported in Table 3. Therefore, the discussion of findings reported in Table 3 will primarily focus on zero-order Pearson Correlation Coefficients.

The model for symbiosis advanced here assumes that neighborhoods and NBOs are essential to coproduction although there is risk that these vehicles might become islands of self-interest. Much as expected, the weak correlation (r= .15) between relational and socio-geographic community gives rise to concerns about competing agendas. Convergence of purpose and symbiosis requires overarching policy or structured collaborative networks to align the actions of neighborhood and the broader community.

Growing fiscal challenges have important implications for quality of life making it increasingly important that a critical mass of resources be assembled and applied to the concerns of community. While tapping into allegiance to community is instrumental to answering fiscal challenges, realistically the contributions of community must be supplemented with additional public resources, including tax dollars (Holzer & Zhang, 2004). Therefore, assessments of willingness to pay are crucial to establishing community priorities.

Table 2
Community, Trust and Willingness to Pay by Subpopulations

Section 1. Race ANOVA: After Tests\ Means		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Community: Relational*** F= 12.3	1,2;2,4;2,6	15.9	16.8	16.5	15.8	16.4	15.1
Community: Socio-Geographic*** F= 12.4	1,2;2,4	18.8	17.6	18.2	19.1	18.4	18.4
Pay: Overall*** F= 13.4	1,2;2,4;2,5;2,6	34.5	37.3	35.9	34.5	34.3	33.5
Pay: Low-Income*** F= 33.4	1,2;1,3;2,4;2,5;2,6	8.4	9.8	9.2	8.4	8.8	8.4
Pay: Beyond Basics*** F= 6.3	1,2	5.0	5.5	5.4	5.0	5.1	5.1
Trust: Performance-Based***F= 7.21	3;1,6;2,6;2,3;3,4;3.6;5,6	10.6	10.7	11.5	10.3	11.4	09.3
Trust: Demonstrated*** F= 7.3	1,2;2,4;2,6	44.6	46.4	45.6	43.5	44.0	43.3
Section 2. Income		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Community: Relational F= 1.1		16.2	16.0	15.9	15.9	16.0	16.1
Community: Socio-Geographic F= 1.4		18.5	18.5	18.6	18.6	18.7	18.9
Pay: Overall F= 0.4		35.1	34.8	34.9	35.0	35.2	34.7
Pay: Low-Income* F= 2.6	1,6	8.9	8.7	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.5
Pay: Beyond Basics F= 1.8		5.3	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1
Trust: Performance-Based*** F= 8.2	1,3;1,4;1,5;1,6;2,6	11.1	10.9	10.6	10.6	10.5	10.3
Trust: Demonstrated * F= 2.2		44.1	44.8	45.0	45.1	45.4	44.5
Section 3. Age		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Community: Relational F= 1.7		16.2	16.2	16.0	15.8	15.9	15.9
Community: Socio-Geographic*** F=4.3	1,6;2,6;3,6;4,6;5,6;1,2;3,1;1,4;1,5	17.7	18.6	18.8	18.5	18.6	18.8
Pay: Overall*** F= 10.6	1,6;2,3;2,4;2,5;2,6	36.2	36.6	34.8	34.6	34.3	34.3
Pay: Low-Income*** F= 9.7	1,3;1,4;1,5;1,6;2,3;2,4;2,5;1,6	9.2	9.1	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.4
Pay: Beyond Basics*** F= 4.4	2,5;2,6	5.4	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.0
Trust: Performance-Based *** F= 9.4	1,3;1,4;1,5;3,6;4,6;5,6	11.2	10.8	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.9
Trust: Demonstrated *** F= 8.2	2,3;2,4;2,5;2,6;4,6	45.2	46.2	44.9	44.9	44.5	44.1
Section 4. Attend Urban School District		**Yes**	**No**				
Community: Relational*** F= 16.4		16.2	15.8				
Community: Socio-Geographic F= 0.6		18.7	18.6				
Willingness to Pay: Overall*** F= 82.0		36.3	34.1				
Willingness to Pay: Low-Income*** F= 39.5		8.9	8.4				
Willingness to Pay: Beyond Basics*** F= 60.5		5.4	5.0				
Trust: Performance-Based* F= 4.3		10.8	10.6				
Trust: Demonstrated*** F= 38.5		45.8	44.4				

Race 1= Caucasian, 2= African-American, 3=Hispanic, 4= Native American, 5= Asian, 6= Other; Education 1= Less than high school, 2= High school, 3= Some college, 4= College, 5= Some graduate study, 6= Graduate degree; Income 1= Less than $20.000, 2= $20,000-$39,999, 3=$40,000-$59,999, 4= $60,000-$79,999, 5= $80,000-$99,999, 6= $100,000 and Above; Age 1= Below 25, 2= 25-35, 3= 36-45, 4= 46-55, 5=56-65, 6= 65 and Above

Symbiotic Relationships

Between

Community & Government

Legend

CR = Community: Relational
CS = Community: Socio-Geographic
TD = Trust: Demonstrated
TP = Trust: Performance-Based
PO = Pay Overall
PL = Pay Low-Income
PB = Pay Beyond Basics

Strength of Correlation:

= Strong
= Moderate - Strong
= Moderate
= Weak

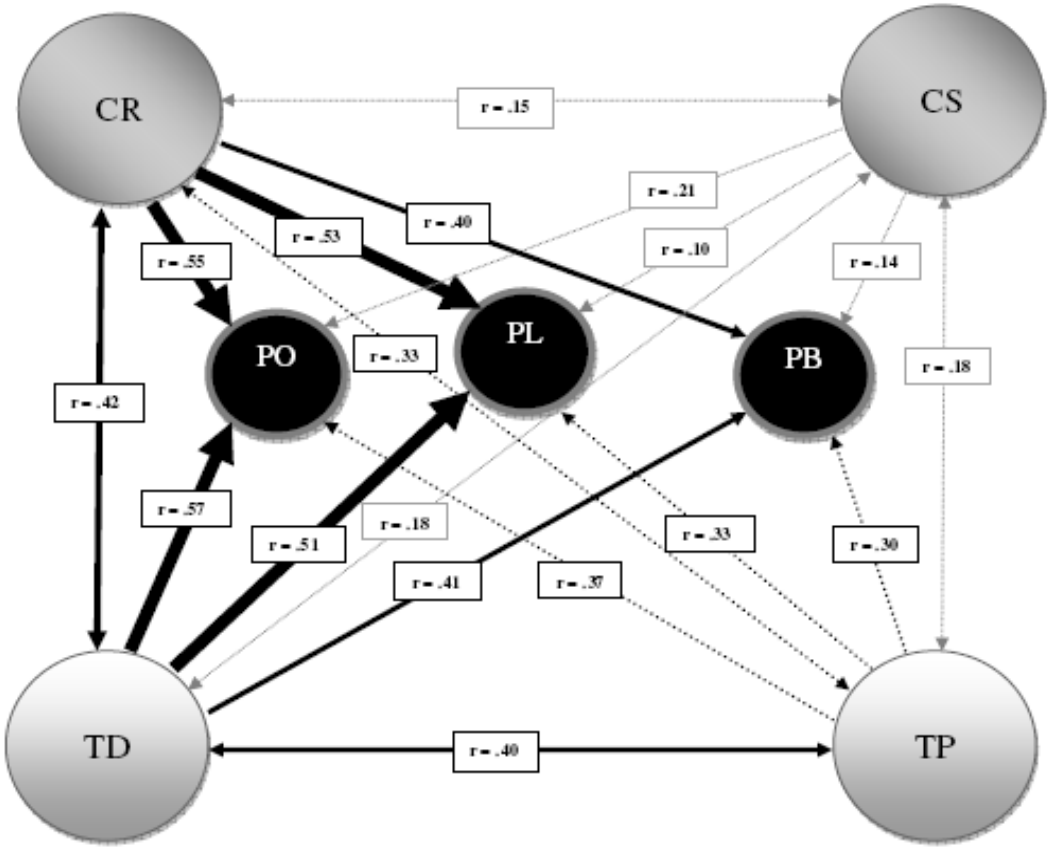

Table 3
Correlation Coefficients: Components of the Conceptual Framework

Partial Controlling for Age Above Diagonal / Zero Order Below the Diagonal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Community: Relational (weighted index)	-	.15	.54	.53	.40	.34	.41
2. Community: Socio-Geographic	.15	-	.22	.11	.15	.18	.19
3. Willingness to Pay: Overall	.55	.21	-	.86	.77	.36	.56
4. Willingness to Pay: Low-Income	.53	.10	.86	-	.54	.33	.50
5. Willingness to Pay: Beyond Basics	.40	.14	.77	.54	-	.29	.41
6. Trust: Performance-Based (weighted index)	.33	.18	.37	.33	.30	-	.36
7. Trust: Demonstrated	.42	.18	.57	.51	.41	.40	-

All correlations coefficients: $p \leq .01$.

In an effort to better understand how willingness to pay varies as a function of the type of investment, it is operationalized through three indices. First, an overall index of willingness to pay has been constructed (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha=.905) that includes all 12 items reported in the Notes Section (Note 3). Second, a subset of three items found in the Notes Section (Note 3) are used to form an index (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha=.803) that focuses more narrowly on providing educational assistance to those who are economically disadvantaged, including pre-kindergarten programming designed to level the educational playing field (Sawhill, 2006). In spite of growing evidence of the importance of early childhood education, it does not necessarily follow that the public appreciates the importance of and is willing to pay for intervention necessary to close the educational divide between advantaged and disadvantaged schoolchildren. The third willingness to pay index (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha=.805) examined here focuses on two items (Note 3) that are less about academic performance and more about the development of the "whole child" (sports facilities and auditoriums). In an age of limited resources, citizens are assumed to be predisposed to support the "basics" of public education, academic achievement.

Table 2 provides insight about the extent to which there are important differences in willingness to pay between various subpopulations. Consistent with the purpose of this research, we are particularly interested in the extent to which willingness to pay is simply a function of self-interest or is tied to community ownership of public schools. The socio-economic profile of schoolchildren served by urban public schools includes disproportionate numbers of schoolchildren who come from low-income households. Accordingly, there is risk that middle and upper-income households, especially those who do not have schoolchildren in the public school system, will withdraw their support for public education.

The first section of the willingness to pay items Table 2) indicates differences based on race. African-Americans are particularly willing to pay for investments (overall mean= 37.3) in the overall educational agenda. African-Americans are also more willing to pay for (mean= 9.8) investments that focus on the concerns of low-income schoolchildren. Since African-Americans are proportionally more likely to live in low-income households and have schoolchildren in the urban public school system, this finding was anticipated. In contrast to expectations related to self-interest, the evidence indicates that there are no important differences in willingness to pay for investment in public education based on household income. Therefore, willingness to pay is not simply a function of need.

Age also potentially represents a form of self-interest. While the entire community benefits from good public schools, younger household are more likely to directly benefit from educational investments. The findings reported in Table 2 indicate that statistically willingness to pay does vary based on age. Consistent with expectations associated with self-interest (MacManus, 1995), younger households, those most likely to have children attending public schools, are somewhat more willing to pay taxes in support of public education.

An important source of self-interest stems from whether or not the taxpayer has children in the urban public school system. Logically, those who stand to benefit the most from investments in public schools are expected to be some of the most willing taxpayers. Much as expected, those who have schoolchildren in the urban public school system are more willing to pay than those who do not, although the differences are not particularly large.

Table 3 provides an assessment of the extent to which there is a connection between relational community and willingness to pay increased taxes. It is one thing for respondents to report that they can rise above self-interest and support both intergenerational and social equity agendas and quite another accept responsibility to pay for those agendas. Table 3 indicates strong zero-order and partial correlations between relational community and willingness to pay. These findings are consistent with the symbiosis agenda advanced here. These findings also strengthen arguments for construct validity as it applies to the construct of relational community. Zero-order correlation coefficients indicate strong correlation between relational community and overall willing to pay overall (r=.55) as well as willingness to pay for investments to assist economically disadvantaged schoolchildren(r=.53). There are somewhat weaker connections (r=.40) between relational community and willingness to pay for investments in public education that are not directly connected to performance.

The results indicate weaker connections between socio-geographic community and willingness to pay. For example, the correlation (r=.21) between socio-geographic community and the overall index of willingness to pay for investments in public education is weak. Generally, then, affiliations associated with socio-geographic community do not necessarily translate into increased willingness to pay. Once again, neighborhoods may be the building blocks of community, but support for socio-geographic community does not necessarily translate

into allegiance to the broader community. Once again, these findings demonstrate the importance of overarching policy promoting congruency between the agendas of neighborhood and the broader community.

Trust as it is defined here includes two forms. First, an index of "performance-based trust" is operationalized through the seven items (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .924) found in Table 4. It is important to note that the summary index for "performance-based trust, is weighted, reducing the combined weight of the four equity items to the weight equivalent to a single item (minimum possible score of 1 and maximum possible score of 4). Second, an index of "demonstrated trust" is formed from nine items (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .933) found in the Notes Section (Note 4).

The individual items that formed the index of performance-based trust (Table 4) merge the construct of trust with performance outcomes. The first two items in the table are normative expectations related to effectiveness. It is generally assumed that a primary objective of public education is to prepare schoolchildren to become productive members of the labor force as well as contributing members to civil society. Nearly two-thirds of the responding citizens believe that the urban public school system can be trusted to invest tax dollars in ways that answer these fundamental concerns. Findings associated with the second group of items generally indicate that the vast majority of citizens trust that public education dollars are being invested in ways that meet the performance objective of equity. The final item in Table 4 focuses on efficiency, referred to here as return on investment. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents report that the public school system can be trusted to invest their tax dollars in ways that assure that students receive the best education possible for the tax dollars invested.

Table 4
Trust in Government: Performance Based

"The {name}Public School System can be trusted to invest tax dollars in ways that assure that students will....."	Mean	Percentages Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Effectiveness: Normative Expectations					
...become productive members of the local labor force	2.61	07.7	30.0	56.2	06.1
...become good citizens and contributors to the Community	2.66	06.7	27.8	58.6	06.9
Equitable Investment of Public Funds					
...receive the same quality of education regardless of race	2.80	06.0	19.8	62.8	11.5
...receive the same quality of education regardless of gender	2.89	04.9	14.4	67.9	12.9
...receive the same quality of education regardless of income	2.77	06.5	21.9	59.8	11.8
...receive the same quality of education regardless of which school students attend in the city	2.62	09.1	30.2	50.4	10.3
Efficiency: Return-On-Investment					
...receive the best education possible for the tax dollars invested	2.58	12.0	28.5	48.9	10.6

Range of N= 5427-5496
Legend for calculation of means: Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Agree=3, Strongly Agree=4

The after-tests found in Table 2 indicate that there is no statistical difference between Caucasians and African-Americans in their assessments of performance based trust (Index). Households with incomes below $20,000 are more likely than any other income class to report that they trust the public school system to invest tax dollars in ways that improve student performance. The youngest households, as well as households with children in the public schools system are also slightly more likely to register performance-based trust. These findings provide evidence that the perceptions of those with and those without schoolchildren in the public school system are converging.

There has been considerable community debate about how public dollars generated from the tax referendum should be invested. An index of demonstrated trust has been formed using the nine items reported in the notes section (Note 4). Demonstrated trust provides an assessment of the extent to which the community approves of how the school district invested the public dollars generated from the issuance of bonds associated with the tax referendum. Essentially, the construct of demonstrated trust represents a measure of process, did the public school system do what it said it would do with the money. Table 2 indicates that African-Americans, more than any other racial class, feel that the school district has demonstrated that it can be trusted. Table 2 indicates no important differences based on household income. Households 35 years of age and younger, those most likely to have school-age children, registered the strongest levels of demonstrated trust. Households with schoolchildren attending the urban public schools are slightly more likely to register demonstrated trust. Once again, these finding indicate convergence of support for urban public schools between those with and without schoolchildren.

Table 3 indicates that there are strong correlations between demonstrated trust and overall willingness to pay (r= .57) as well as willingness to pay for investments in low-income schoolchildren (r= .51). The findings also indicate a connection between demonstrated trust and willingness to pay for investments that are not directly linked to academic performance although this correlation is not quite as strong (r=.41).

Both relational community and demonstrated trust have strong connections to willingness to pay taxes. In addition, relational community and demonstrated trust have fairly strong connections (r= .42) with each other. Accordingly, if local government is to have a reasonable hope of enlisting contributions from citizens towards community well-being and to gain access to resources necessary to answer the challenges of urban public education, it must model the

behavior that it expects from citizens. This implies that government must involve citizens in the important decisions that shape community well-being and must continuously demonstrate that these investments are consistent with promises and the long-term well-being of community. In other words, many of the actions taken by government to demonstrate that it can be trusted to invest public dollars can be expected to bring returns in the form of strengthened relational community. Further, the reverse is also likely to be true.

Summary of Findings

The last section of the findings uses multiple regression to assess the extent to which community and trust explain variation in willingness to pay. A theoretical model of symbiosis is advanced and therefore, a hierarchical model with predetermined order of entry for the predictors is used (Field, 2005).

Given the many and growing problems facing urban communities, collaborative solutions involving public and community resources are becoming increasingly important. The framework for symbiosis advanced here argues that government must model the behavior that it expects from citizens by demonstrating public leadership intent on building relational community. This means that government must behave in ways that encourage citizens to think less about their personal well-being and more about community well-being today and tomorrow including the creation of opportunity for all classes of citizens. Previous research focused on relational community provides evidence that citizens who are attached to community are more likely to: hold positive views of local government performance, be more willing to join with government to coproduce improvement, and be more willing to pay increased taxes. Unfortunately, most of the research related to relational community focuses more narrowly on the paradox between community and self-interest. The research advanced here contributes to the content validity of

the construct of relational community through the addition of two dimensions including intergenerational and social equity. These additions are expected to add to the explanatory power and consequently, relational community has been selected as the first entry into the regression model.

The index of demonstrated trust is the second forced entry into the regression model. Government must involve citizens in strategic decisions, articulate how it plans to invest tax dollars, and demonstrate that it has invested public resources as planned. Nine questionnaire items form the index demonstrating that the school district is worthy of trust as it relates to public investment. It was assumed that public trust gains from investments associated with the first referendum would strengthen the credibility of government. Demonstrated trust and relational community are the corner-stones of symbiosis and are expected to interact in ways that contribute to or detract from the willingness of citizens to pay increased taxes.

Performance-based trust is the third forced entry in the regression model. Demonstrated trust focuses on process and implementation while performance-based trust focuses on outcomes. Logically, there should be connections between process and outcomes. It is also reasonable to anticipate connections between performance-based trust and willingness to pay but we do not fully understand the connections in the minds of citizens between performance, trust, and willingness to pay **(**Geert & Van de Walle, 2003; Yang & Holzer, 2006).

The last item to be loaded in the model focuses on socio-geographic community organized around neighborhood. The Urban school district is making strategic investments in neighborhood schools and will use resources associated with the second referendum to finance investments in these schools. While it is clear that neighborhoods and NBOs are critical to the

success of these schools, it is not clear that commitment to neighborhood translates into willingness to pay.

The overall regression model including all four predictor variables has considerable explanatory power (Table 5, adjusted R^2 = .455). In contrast to the hypothesized model for symbiosis, the final regression model (4) reported in Table 5 indicates that demonstrated trust (beta= .376) appears to be slightly more important in explaining variation in willingness to pay than that relational community (beta= .348). The change in beta values associated with relational community between the first model (beta= .548) and the second model (beta= .373) indicates interaction with demonstrated trust. Both performance-based trust (beta= .085) and socio-geographic community (beta= .076) enter the final model but their contributions are limited in comparison to relational community and demonstrated trust. Analysis not displayed here indicates that when performance-based trust is forced to enter the regression model without the other three predictors (adjusted R^2 = .139) it offers more explanatory power than a similar forced entry of socio-geographic community (R^2 = .048).

The regression results reported here in combination with the earlier reported correlations (Table 3, Figure 1) provide insight to be applied to understanding of symbiosis. Demonstrated trust invites citizens to join with government to assess process, the extent to which government has invested public resources as promised and in ways that are consistent with the long-term well-being of community. Performance-based trust extends performance measurement beyond process to include expectations for performance outcomes. Strong zero-order correlations between demonstrated trust and willingness to pay in combination with moderate correlations between performance-based trust and willingness to pay provide evidence that the public feels that the school district can be trusted to invest public dollars in ways that position public

education for success but questions remain in the minds of citizens about the intended outcomes. The moderate-strong correlation (r= .40) between demonstrated and performance-based trust is consistent with this understanding. Finally, the moderate-strong correlation (r= .41) between demonstrated trust and relational community in combination with the regression loading discussed above provide evidence for synergism between demonstrated trust and relational community. In other words, actions on the part of government that are fruitful in building trust may also strengthen relational community and vice versa.

Table 5
Multiple Regression: Hierarchical

Dependent Variable - Willingness to Pay: Overall	B	Beta	t sig.	Adj. R^2
Model 1: Predictors				
Community: Relational (weighted index)	1.495	.548	.001	
F= 1887.8; Sig.= .001				.300
Model 2: Predictors				
Community: Relational (weighted index)	1.016	.373	.001	
Trust: Demonstrated (weighted index)	.424	.416	.001	
F= 1744.2; Sig.= .001				.442
Model 3: Predictors				
Community: Relational (weighted index)	.963	.353	.001	
Trust: Demonstrated	.393	.385	.001	
Trust: Performance-Based (weighted index)	.271	.094	.001	
F= 1196.1; Sig.= .001				.449
Model 4: Predictors				
Community: Relational (weighted index)	.950	.348	.001	
Trust: Demonstrated	.384	.376	.001	
Trust: Performance-Based (weighted index)	.245	.085	.001	
Community: Socio-Geographic	.176	.076	.001	
F= 916.9; Sig.= .001				.455

Conclusions

This research argues that as fiscal challenges intensify it becomes increasingly important to build symbiotic relationships between community and government. Symbiosis as it is defined here involves changes in the behavior of both citizens and government and often includes collaboration between a variety of governmental and community-based agencies. Citizen engagement is instrumental to symbiosis and can be channeled through a variety of governmental and community-based organizations including neighborhood. Citizen engagement includes involvement in strategic decisions and in some cases, coproduction. When citizens are engaged in meaningful ways they become less concerned with self and more concerned about shared interest in community (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003). This paradox between community and self-interest is a key dimension of relational community. Early research focusing on relational community and the paradox between community and self-interest found that those who were attached to community were more likely to see local government in a positive light including satisfaction with service delivery. Early research also provided preliminary evidence of a connection between community attachment and willingness to pay. This research builds on these early findings by developing a more conceptually inclusive and content valid version of relational community through the addition of two dimensions including social and intergenerational equity.

Symbiosis demands changes in the behavior of government including a willingness to reject demands made by those who represent narrow bands of self-interest and honoring those consistent with the public interest. Symbiosis is facilitated when public leaders work with the community to advance an agenda that encourages community ownership of public schools. The vast majority of taxpayers who fund urban public education do not have children in these

schools. Therefore, if self-interest rules taxpayers become unwilling to pay. Historically, Americans have supported public education with the understanding that when opportunity is created for schoolchildren we all benefit. When public schools become disproportionately poor, as they commonly are in urban communities, there is increased risk that those who have the capacity to pay will become unwilling. In contrast to concerns about a rising tide of self-interest, the findings reported here provide evidence that commitment to relational community is related to willingness to pay. Accordingly, government would be well-advised to model the behavior that it seeks from citizens. Government must demonstrate through its behavior that its actions are consistent with relational community including rejecting demands from narrow bands of self-interest, investing today to preserve the future, and advancing social equity including creating opportunity for disadvantaged segments of the community. Symbiosis builds on the understanding that the community benefits when opportunity is created for disadvantaged schoolchildren and that some of the largest community gains potentially come from the inclusion of those who have been previously excluded.

Intergenerational equity is an important dimension of relational community and schoolchildren are the future. Therefore, government actions must include balanced concern for the needs of community today and tomorrow; public leaders must help citizens recognize obligations to the future. In contrast to expectations, findings indicate that citizens are particularly willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. These findings provide evidence that community-based strategic planning can be a useful tool for lengthening the time horizons of citizens and for promoting convergence of purpose in the case of intersector collaboration.

Socio-geographic community, or neighborhoods, can form the building-blocks of community or can be a source of self-interest promoting behavior that is inconsistent with community well-being. Misalignment between the agendas of neighborhood and the broader community potentially detract from symbiosis. The findings reported here indicate that concerns about disconnect between socio-geographic and relational community are justified. Symbiosis including coproduction channeled through neighborhoods depends on public leadership and the formation of an overarching strategic agenda that promotes congruence between socio-geographic and relational community.

Demonstrated trust comes in many forms and symbiosis naturally includes connections with relational community. Thomas (1998) argues that government and the very nature of public goods and services promotes asymmetric relationships between citizens and government. The intent of symbiosis is to create symmetry between citizens and government by encouraging commitment to relational community, demonstrating that government can be trusted to invest as planned, and performance evidence that investments produce results. Contributions to symmetry potentially come in many forms and through a variety of vehicles. Citizen involvement in strategic decisions and demonstrations that public investment is consistent with the will of the community promote symmetry in the relationship between citizens and government. Demonstrated trust and relational community are the cornerstones of symbiosis and they interact in ways that make them potentially powerful tools when implemented in concert.

Any number of community-based vehicles and activities can be used to simultaneously strengthen demonstrated trust and relational community. The challenges of urban public education make intergovernmental and intersector collaboration essential. Neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations are particularly important vehicles for collaborative solutions.

When neighbors come together to coproduce a nurturing cocoon around neighborhood schools, it potentially promotes symbiosis between neighborhood, school, and the broader community. Symbiosis can also be advanced if collaborating units of local government develop shared definitions of neighborhood. In other words, when units of local government join with citizens to define the natural boundaries of socio-geographic space, they facilitate convergence of purpose between government and community. These actions demonstrate to citizens that government is interested in a symmetrical relationship with the community where citizens are willing to coproduce and pay for improvements with demonstrated merit.

Finally, performance-based trust, or the extent to which the public feels that government invests tax-dollars in ways that produce returns on investment is also related to willingness to pay although the connections are not as strong as the connections between demonstrated trust, relational community, and willingness to pay. Generally, then, the evidence indicates that tangible demonstrations of process and the trustworthiness of government are related to perceptions of performance and willingness to pay. Symmetry in the relationship between citizens and government is promoted when performance, measures of performance (including both process and outcome), and perceptions of performance are aligned. Alignment requires improved citizen engagement processes that more clearly define the nature of public concerns, challenges associated with addressing these concerns, and an appreciation of public interest.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Frances Majors for her editorial input improving the manuscript.

Notes

Note 1. Relational Community: Social Equity Index

Seven items have been combined to form an index that measures social equity (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .923), used here to form a dimension of the overall construct of relational community attachment. The seven social equity items are proportionally weighted (Overall social equity score (seven items) divided by 3.5) giving social equity equal weighting with the paradox and intergenerational equity items. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of

agreement (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree) with the following statements.

"The community is responsible for making sure that schoolchildren get the assistance they need when they...."

1...have fallen behind their classmates.
2...have parents who are unwilling to help them with their school work.
3...have parents who are unable to help them with their school work.
4...are ahead of their classmates and are capable of learning at a faster pace.
5...have mental or physical impairments that make learning difficult.
6...come from low-income families and enter kindergarten behind their classmates.
7...come from low-income families and have fallen behind their classmates.

Note 2. Socio-Geographic Community: Support for Neighborhood Schools

The index is formed from six items (NEIGH4+NEIGH6+NEIGH7+NEIGH8+NEIGH9 +NEIGH10) that measure support for neighborhood schools (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .904, Range of Scores= 6-24). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree) with the following statements.

"Neighborhood schools promote increased…."

1…communication between neighbors about the activities of schoolchildren.
2…sense of belonging because schoolchildren go to school close to home where friends and family live.
3…volunteerism and the willingness of neighborhood residents to assist in the education of school of schoolchildren.
4…investment in homes and residential property near neighborhood schools.
5…cooperation between neighborhood residents, schools and community police officers. to make neighborhoods safer.
6…investment in neighborhoods by neighborhood organizations.

Note 3. Willingness to Pay Items

Respondents were asked to indicate willingness to pay (1= Definitely Not Willing to Pay, 2= Probably Not Willing to Pay, 3= Probably Willing to Pay, 4= Definitely Willing to Pay) for the following investments.

Willingness to Pay: Low-Income

1. Make extra investments in neighborhood schools serving disadvantaged schoolchildren to help them catch up
2. Pay higher salaries to good teachers who are willing to teach in low-income neighborhoods with the greatest need.
3. Increase the number of pre-kindergarten and early childhood programs for DISADVANTAGED children to ensure they are prepared to start school.

Willingness to Pay: Beyond the Basics

4. Build auditoriums for fire arts presentations, student assemblies, etc. that could serve as community meeting centers.
5. Build sports facilities that could be jointly used by the school district and the community for competitive athletics, fitness, and recreation.

Willingness to Pay: Additional Items

6. Build new or renovate existing schools if necessary to eliminate forced busing, allowing schoolchildren throughout the community to return to neighborhood schools.
7. Build additional classrooms and hire additional teachers to reduce class size and provide individualized student assistance.
8. Build new schools to accommodate students in growing residential areas in the southeast and northeast areas of the community.

9. Increase the number of pre-kindergarten and early childhood programs for ALL children to ensure they are prepared to start school.
10. Develop educational opportunities for academically advanced students to progress at a faster pace.
11. Recruit and retain good teachers by offering superior teachers higher salaries.
12. Develop vocational/trade school training for students who are not college bound.

Note 4. Demonstrated Trust: Support investments funded through the Issuance of Bonds

An index of demonstrated trust (Standardized Cronbach's Alpha= .933, Range of Scores= 9-54) has been formed based on responses to the following items. Respondents were asked to reflect on the previous referendum and to indicate their approval of how the school board invested their tax dollars.

"In 2000, voters passed a referendum that supported investments in public education. Please review the following and circle the number that best describes your approval rating for how your money has been invested (1=Strongly Disapprove, 2=Disapprove, 3=Somewhat Disapprove, 4=Somewhat Approve, 5=Approve, 6=Strongly Approve). "

1. Removed portable classrooms, rehabilitated and constructed new classrooms to reduce class size and overcrowding to improve the learning environment.
2. Renovated older buildings including replacing plumbing, updating and expanding electrical systems, replacing or repairing windows and doors, upgrading heating systems, etc.
3. Installed air-conditioning to control classroom temperature for student comfort and improved performance.
4. Added/improved science labs to prepare students for a rapidly changing world in which math and sciences are becoming increasingly important.
5. Constructed new and renovated older school libraries to increase student access to printed and electronically distributed information.
6. Constructed multipurpose rooms to be used for storm shelters/safe areas from tornados and also are used for physical education, lunch, student assemblies, etc.
7. Invested in technology including computer systems to aid classroom instruction and communication and to prepare students for a world in which technology is increasingly important.
8. Reduced classroom health risks related to asbestos, water quality, air quality, etc.
9. Improved access and learning opportunities for students with physical disabilities.

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