

Community Discussion Event:
Re-Segregation of Tulsa's Schools

6:30 p.m., Thursday, September 4, 2014

Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 North Hartford Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma



Children flock to Burroughs Little School, Tulsa's first voluntary-busing desegregation project, circa 1973. Tulsa Public Schools photo.

Dan Allen Center for Social Justice

This program is sponsored by the Dan Allen Center for Social Justice, which fosters social justice through education, outreach, advocacy, and demonstration of social justice.

As part of that mission, the Center is sponsoring this forum, in the tradition of the late Father Dan Allen, the Center's namesake who fought for Tulsa's poor in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Center has invited these distinguished panelists to discuss current trends that are isolating poor and minority children in Tulsa.

The Center is sponsoring the discussion with a goal to move the community forward on issues of poverty and its causes in Tulsa.

Visit the Center's Website: www.danallencenter.org

GIVE A DAMN ... about your fellow man!

"In a few days, a higher portion of America's black children will begin school in classrooms without any white children than before the Supreme Court's historic 'Brown v. Board of Education' decision. The reason isn't official segregation by race but unofficial residential segregation by income.

"Since poor kids are disproportionately black and brown, and America's poor now live in vast geographic concentrations of poverty, their schoolmates are also likely to be black and brown.

"And due to the concentration of poverty, the local tax bases whose revenues supply those schools with 40% of their funding are shrinking -- with the result that they'll start school in overcrowded classrooms with inexperienced teachers and inadequate materials. As the Warren court unanimously held in 1954, separate is not equal. It still isn't.

"A shooting in Ferguson, Mo. triggers a national discussion about police and race. Important as that is, we're not talking about the even more fundamental outrage of schools and race. Why?"

- Robert Reich, August 2014

Community Discussion Event: **Re-Segregation of Tulsa's Schools**

This discussion forum convenes distinguished speakers to explore important issues of poverty, race, and education of vital concern to our community.

2014 marks the 60th anniversary of the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education Supreme Court decision to end racial segregation of public schools.

After decades of civil rights struggles, trends show that many children are again isolated by poverty and race in critically under-supported public schools in Tulsa and elsewhere.

- Where is Tulsa today in meeting the spirit of that landmark ruling?
- What is the legacy of the hard-fought battle to address segregation and social isolation in Tulsa and its schools?
- Are current demographic and policy trends leading to Tulsa being re-segregated?
 - Are our schools a "canary in the mine" warning of broader social trends?
- Is there still merit to actively seeking diversity in our schools and our neighborhoods?

Featured speakers

Ms. Laura Ross White, Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa

Dr. David Blatt, Oklahoma Policy Institute

Mr. Ed Martinez, Jr., Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Tulsa

Dr. Jocelyn Lee Payne, John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation

Dr. Keith Ballard, Tulsa Public Schools

Moderator

Dr. Edwin Rossman, President, Dan Allen Center for Social Justice

The forum will be open for audience questions after the panel presentations.

The Dan Allen Center for Social Justice is grateful to the distinguished panelists who have come to discuss current trends that are isolating poor and minority children in Tulsa. Their brief biographies are presented here in the order of their presentations.



Ms. Laura Ross-Wright
Community Services Council of Greater Tulsa

Currently working in the field of community planning at the Community Service Council of Tulsa, Laura Ross-White is focused on bringing high-level education to the greater Tulsa community in preparation of total health care transformation.

She is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma Master of Social Work Program, focusing her studies in administration and community practice. Laura has designed and participated in multiple research projects highlighting how health care reform will impact all members of the medical neighborhood, including the most vulnerable of patient populations and non-profit organizations.

Laura, along with her peer's, graduate research was awarded top honors in the Social and Behavioral Science category at the 2013 University of Oklahoma-Tulsa and University of Tulsa Graduate Research Day.

Laura additionally holds a Bachelors of Social Work degree and a Bachelors of Arts in Developmental Psychology degree from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Laura's academic and social accomplishments have included induction into the Northeastern State University Hall of Fame; the Jack A. Kaufman Outstanding University Senior Award; Northeastern State University Student Ambassador of the Year Award; University Volunteer of the Year Award; and the DELTA Leadership Academy Legacy and Ambassador Awards.

Laura is the past president of the University of Oklahoma's-Tulsa Campus Phi Alpha Honor Society and voting member of the OU-Tulsa Student Government Association.



David Blatt, Ph.D.
Oklahoma Policy Institute

Dr. David Blatt is Executive Director of Oklahoma Policy Institute, a Tulsa-based think-tank that promotes adequate, fair, and fiscally responsible funding of public services and expanded opportunity for all Oklahomans by providing timely and credible information, analysis, and ideas.

David helped found OK Policy in 2008 and served as Director of Policy before becoming the organization's Director in 2010. David's work involves conducting research, writing papers, and giving public presentations on state budget and tax policy, poverty, health care, and various other subjects. He writes a weekly column, Prosperity Policy, which appears in the *Journal Record* and is a frequent contributor to the editorial pages of the state's leading newspapers.

A member and regional co-chair of the Scholars Strategy Network, David is recognized as one of the state's leading experts on fiscal policy and was selected as political scientist of the year by the Oklahoma Political Science Association in 2013.

David previously served for as Director of Public Policy for Community Action Project of Tulsa County and as a budget analyst for the Oklahoma State Senate. He has a Ph.D. in political science from Cornell University and a B.A. from the University of Alberta.

He lives in Tulsa with his wife, Patty Hipsher, a special education teacher in Broken Arrow, and their son, Noah.



Mr. Ed Martinez
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Tulsa

Ed Martinez is the principal for Ed Martinez Agency, a State Farm Insurance and Financial Services agency, and Ranger Enterprises LLC. He is in his 21st year of service for State Farm. Ed started his agency in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1993, serving there for 2 years. He was asked to move to Tulsa to help with the first-ever Agency 2000 training program in 1995. In the 2 years Ed worked with the program, he helped place 48 agents in Kansas and Oklahoma.

For 2004, he qualified as a member of the Chairman's Circle and to the Central Zone Vice President's Council. He has qualified for Legion of Honor for 12 years, Bronze Tablet for 5 years, most recently qualified as a Silver Scroll Agent and has traveled 5 years. In 2005, his agency was honored with the Tulsa Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Advance Award as the small business of the year.

Prior to joining State Farm, Ed served as an officer in the United States Army, retiring after 20 years. He is a veteran of the Cold War, Operation Desert Shield, and Operation Desert Storm. He has been awarded the United States Army Bronze Star for his service during the Pershing Gulf War, has 6 awards of the Meritorious Service medal, 3 awards of the Army Commendation metal and an Army Achievement Medal. He has been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, has the Ranger Tab, and was Airborne qualified.

His agency employs 4 people and is located in midtown Tulsa. He is a member of the *Tulsa World* Community Editorial Board. He is the immediate past Chairman of the Board of Tulsa's Community Health Connection, which he help found in 2005. He is the immediate past Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Greater Tulsa Hispanic Chamber, which he helped found in December of 1998. He has served on the board of the Tulsa Metropolitan Urban League for 6 years, and is a founding member of the American Dream Coalition, which advocates for comprehensive immigration reform. He is not married and has 4 children and one grandchild, Caydence.



Dr. Jocelyn Lee Payne
John Hope Franklin Center

Dr. Jocelyn Lee Payne is the Executive Director of the John Hope Franklin Center. With a background in civic engagement, research and education, Jocelyn comes to the John Hope Franklin Center bringing a lifetime of advocacy regarding race and reconciliation.

Dr. Payne has served in leadership positions at Creighton University, Bryn Mawr College and most recently at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah as an Associate Professor and former Vice President for Administration.

A proud Tulsa native, Jocelyn graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and earned her undergraduate degree from Brandeis University. She completed the Master of Science in College Teaching at Northeastern State University and the Doctor of Higher Education Administration from Oklahoma State University.



Keith Ballard, Ed. D
Tulsa Public Schools

Dr. Keith Ballard is the superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools. As superintendent, Dr. Ballard oversees the largest school district in Oklahoma with 88 campuses, 41,000 students, 7,000 employees and a \$500 million budget. Focusing on college preparedness, Superintendent Ballard is committed to cultivating teacher talent in a performance-based culture and providing quality learning experiences for every student, every day, without exception.

During his tenure, Dr. Ballard worked to pass the largest bond in the history of the state totaling \$354 million. He led the way for the district to work with the Gates Foundation on teacher and leader effectiveness, one of only 10 school districts selected in the US. And, he continues to successfully manage Project Schoolhouse, an ongoing efficiency program which addresses changing student populations and school building utilization.

Dr. Ballard is devoted to the education of Tulsa students and has received many awards for his work. His honors include the 2012 University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Excellence in Education Leadership Award, 2012 State Superintendent of the Year, 2012 Tulsa People Tulsan of the Year, 2012 Vision in Education Leadership Award from the Tulsa Community College Foundation, Top 100 Administrators in North America, the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Outstanding Alumni Award, the Don Newby/Ben Hill award from the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry for Compassion and Concern for all Human Beings, and is a member of the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame. Dr. Ballard is also active with the Oklahoma State Legislature and consults regularly with state leaders to help shape policy.

Dr. Ballard earned his Doctorate in Educational Administration from Oklahoma State University, Administrative Certification from the University of Tulsa, Master of Education as a reading specialist from Northwestern Oklahoma State University, and Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Psychology and Speech from Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas.

Superintendent Ballard and his wife Christie have three adult children and six grandchildren.



Edwin J. Rossman, Ph.D
Dan Allen Center for Social Justice

Ed Rossman serves as forum moderator.

He is president of the Dan Allen Center for Social Justice. Before he joined the board of directors and was elected president in the fall of 2013, Ed volunteered his technical expertise to the various endeavors of the Center.

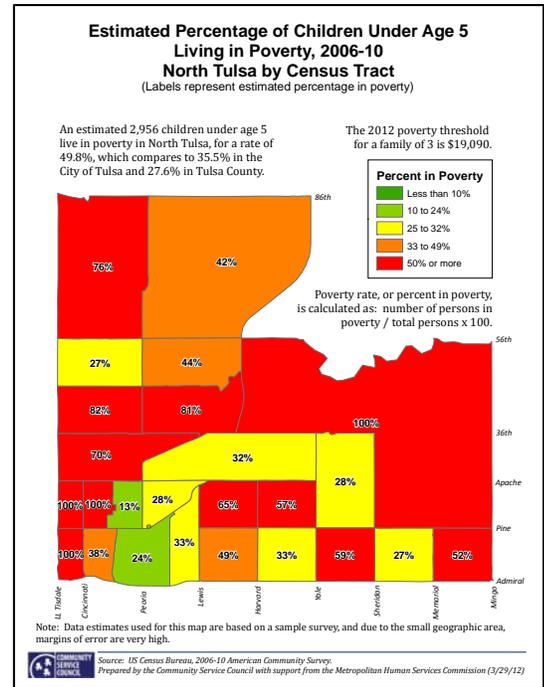
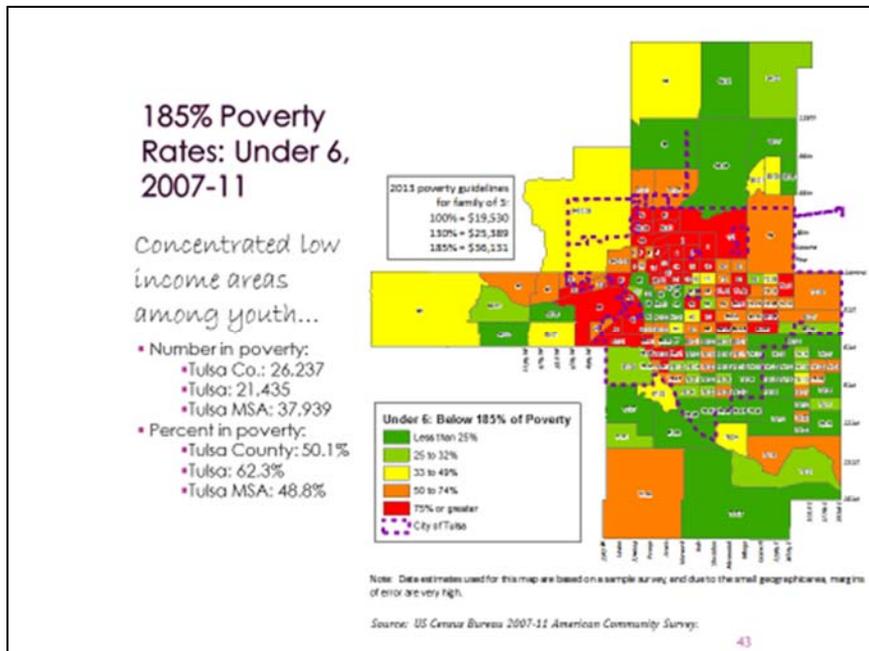
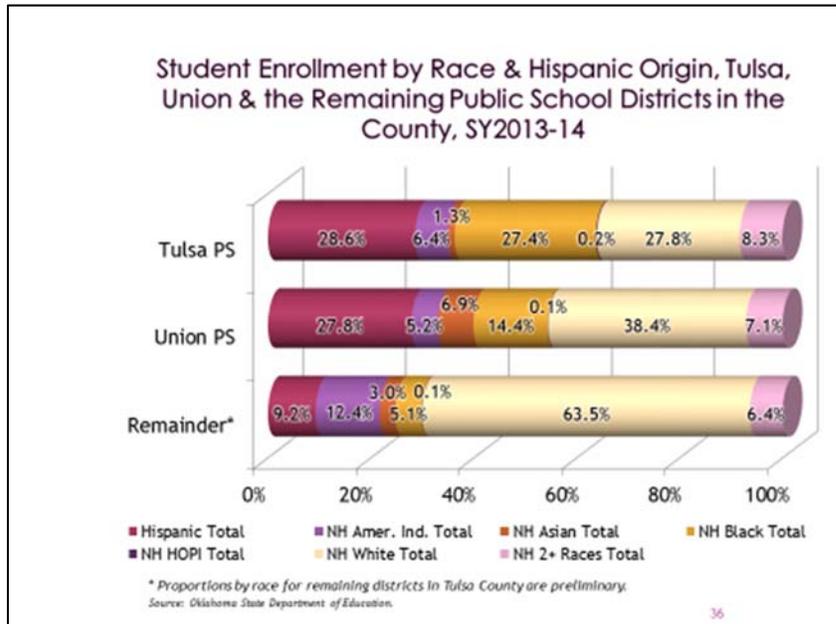
Dr. Rossman is a sociologist by training and has worked in water resources planning for more than 33 years. His career focus has been social and economic considerations relating to flood risk management, water supply availability, and other aspects of water resources. He was lead for the investigations of cultural and historic consequences for the Federal Interagency Performance Evaluation Team that addressed the Hurricane Katerina aftermath.

A recurring theme in Ed's career and personal endeavors has been his deep concern about environmental and social injustice. Over the years, he has also volunteered his time to many non-profit organizations in the Tulsa area, including donating musical performances for events, coaching youth sports, and his homeowners association.

Tulsa Demographic Patterns Today

Tulsa Community Service Council data show that both racial diversity and poverty are increasingly concentrated in areas served by Tulsa Public Schools. More than 88 percent of TPS students now qualify for free or reduced lunches, while only 27.8 percent of TPS students are classified as non-Hispanic whites. The CSC graphic at right shows that Hispanics are now the leading minority in both TPS and Union Public Schools. By comparison, in the remainder of county, 63.5 percent of public school students are white.

Those trends are well-established. The left map shows that, of future students, those now under 6 years of age, 62.3 percent in the City of Tulsa are classified as poor (with family incomes of around \$36,000 for a family of three). In some census tracts, 100 percent of the children live in poverty (below, right). And the City of Tulsa is experiencing little growth among the young, except among Hispanics. Tulsa's non-Hispanic youngsters under age 18 decreased by almost 8,000 (about 6 percent) between 2000 and 2010, while Hispanics increased by 14,200 (116 percent), according to CSC information.



Notes