Prairie Centre Final Report

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Project Title: Fostering Acceptance and Integration of Immigrant Students:
          Examining Effective School-based Approaches in Prairie Schools

Metropolis Policy Priority Area Two:
          Policies and programs necessary to ensure the integration of children and
          youth of immigrant origin, particularly visible minorities"
          -   *Research Topic One*: The impact of racism
          -   *Research Topic Two:* The role of schools and teachers and
              agents of integration, countering negative inter-group attitudes
              and discrimination and prejudice.

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Fostering Acceptance and Integration of Immigrant Students:

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Research Report

Abstract

This research project was originally part of a joint Education Domain project entitled "Factors of Schooling that Influence the Integration of Immigrant Students in the Canadian Prairie Region." The project identified and studied informal, school-based responses to immigrant and refugee students in a variety of schools in the Canadian prairie region, and looked at determining best practices based on the data generated. The focus was on school-based initiatives designed specifically to enhance the social acceptance of immigrant and refugee students' cultural and linguistic diversity within school communities. In total, our research engaged 13 participants in three prairie provinces, with six adult and seven youth respondents. The results of this study have been shared with social justice scholars and activists alike, academic researchers, teacher educators, curriculum policy developers, school administrators, and community agencies committed to progressive diversity initiatives for immigrant and refugee students. The results have been shared at one international and two national academic conferences, and published in three refereed conference proceedings, with additional manuscripts in various stages of preparation and submission.

Statement of the Problem

We positioned the pilot study itself as a vehicle both for facilitating and evaluating antiracism activism, and an instrument of community building among committed teachers and students. Rather than deny or downplay our past experiences in the field, we sought to use our roles as "insiders" to obtain more relevant and sound data. Refining the methodology for larger national studies of school activists using the web-based resource materials is another goal for the study.

During the first year of this research project, my Research Assistant, Maryam Nabavi, and I refined the literature review and updated our survey of existing programs and resources in the prairie region. Last year, Maryam and I located and sought consent to interview several regional school-based activists who had undertaken projects in their communities to foster the acceptance of immigrant and refugee students. The researcher and RA undertook data-gathering last spring, arranging visits to travel to Regina and Winnipeg, the two target cities besides Calgary in the other prairie provinces.

Rationale

Following Dei's (1996) notion of "integrative antiracism" that honours the lived conditions of marginalized groups of people, we focused our attention on a small number of specific school-based efforts to address discrimination and inequities in collaborative ways. Our study attended to "the social meaning of race and its intersections with other forms of social difference and oppression" (p. 19).

As in other western democracies, Canadian public schools are microcosms of our pluralistic society and exciting locations for studying how we might best approach living productively with diversity in this country. They can also be sites of conflict based on

ethnic and cultural differences with their growing diversity mirroring Canada's recent

demographic changes (Li, 1999, 2003). Developing proactive educational approaches to

the cultural diversity brought about by immigrant and refugee students needs to honour

Li's (2003) reminder that integration is not simply about confining people to rigid

expectations and norms; rather, "integration is about giving newcomers the right of

contestation, the legitimacy of dissent, and the entitlement to be different" (p. 330). An

ever-growing body of academic literature in both Canada and the U.S. shows promising

efforts to reflect cultural sensitivity in teaching materials, training and practices (Dei &

Calliste, 2000; Marx, 2004; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 1996; Solomon & Rezai-Rashti, 2001).

Recent educational research that examines administrative and policy changes necessary

to address the growing ethnocultural diversity in schools (Apple, 1999; Corson, 2000;

Ghosh & Abdi, 2004) has offered numerous insights into reform. The researchers have

designed this project to examine the views of students engaged in collaborative, school-

based approaches to fostering integration.

        Research consistently reveals that many young people continue to experience

racism in Canada (Alberta Human Rights Commission, 1993; Pruegger & Kiely, 2002;

Statistics Canada, 2002). The engagement of student activists in educational research

resists a growing conservative backlash toward youth culture in general; Giroux (1996)

noted that "youth" as a social category is too often used as a catalyst for panic and fear.

More recently, Giroux (2003) has observed: "If not represented as a symbol of fashion or

hailed as a hot niche, youth are often portrayed as a problem, a danger to adult society or,

even worse, irrelevant to the future" (p. xiv). Besides the limited data generated by

standardized surveys of "youth attitudes" on a broad range of issues (e.g., Bibby, 2001;

Griffith & Labercane, 1995) students have rarely been engaged in meaningful ways in educational research on antiracism activism, and their understandings of the potential applications of technology in this area remain largely unexamined. This project has engaged student participants as leaders in the struggle to make schools more equitable.

This project builds on the researchers' combined expertise and experiences in antiracism research and activism. As a high school teacher Lund formed an award-winning student activist program, *Students and Teachers Opposing Prejudice (STOP)* that has remained a model of collaborative antiracism activism for two decades (Alberta Human Rights Commission, 2000). For the past several years Lund has sought a clearer understanding of the practical realities of antiracism work among activist teachers and students (Lund, 1998, 2003a, 2003b). Nabavi has extensive experience working in the social justice field, has lived and worked overseas, has spoken and written on youth activism, and is the former Youth Coordinator of the *Youth Reach Out Against Racism (ROAR)* program in Calgary. We trust this project begins to address a need for educational research in this field that includes the views and experiences of actual students and practitioners.

Theoretical Framework

As researchers and activists we have an overarching goal to understand and analyze the complex nature of how students and teachers form and sustain coalitions and make use of technology to establish and sustain projects in schools. Our approach emerges from a critical theoretical stance toward educational research that seeks interaction with political struggles across issues of "race," ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other contested elements of social identity (e.g., Dei & Calliste, 2000;

Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 2003). We have followed Hall's (1992) theorizing on culture and identity, a perspective that recognizes "race" as a social construction while acknowledging the racialized context of schooling and the pervasiveness of racism. A large body of literature on multicultural education in Canada also informs this work (e.g., Ghosh, 1996; James, 2005; Moodley, 1995), but the traditional multicultural approach to school research remains problematic, in part because of its conceptual overlap with federal multicultural policies and programs. In addition, much public debate surrounds multiculturalism in general, and the academic literature reflects numerous critiques of multicultural theorists' failure to address systemic forms of racism (James, 2005). Directing specific attention to antiracism education includes a critical and dynamic understanding of racism, refined and revised in light of emerging insights from our collaboration with research participants.

Many teachers and students have chosen to organize initiatives to foster acceptance in schools across Canada, but relatively few sources exist for meaningful guidance in forming, sustaining, and studying school-based coalitions. An earlier pilot project for this research (Lund, 2003a) sought to answer this need by developing an interactive, web-based resource for school activists based on in-depth interviews with selected student and teacher activists working in coalitions in Alberta schools. The researchers made use of this resource as a key data-gathering tool and directed the focus of the investigation to actual uses and understandings of school projects. Research participants' engagement with the *Diversity Toolkit* resource (Lund, 2005) and other web resources offered focal points for understanding how students and teachers implement antiracism initiatives.

Guiding research questions included:

1. How do teachers and students conceptualize and articulate their antiracism activism?

2. How might web-based resources and other uses of technology for antiracism activists aid in fostering collaborative research relationships for studying the understandings of school-based practitioners?

3. How might these understandings, based on the lived experiences of school antiracism activists, inform research, policies and programming for immigrant and refugee students?

Methodology

During the initial phases of the project, the researchers took a survey of existing programs and resources, including recent research conducted on the use of specific antiracism and diversity resources across the prairie region. Interviews were held with 13 school-based activists who have undertaken projects to foster the acceptance of immigrant and refugee students. Seven participants were student interviewees who ranged in age from 15-20 years old, while six were educators who work in school or community settings with young people. Efforts were made to sample a diverse mix of students and teachers from schools representing a range of cultural and socioeconomic demographics and a balance of gender, age and other characteristics.

Field visits entailed meeting with activists in major cities in each of the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Activists were selected using a variation of convenience sampling that sought community, professional and expert contacts. The researchers conducted field observations and in-depth collaborative

interviews with seven student and six adult participants following protocols of critical ethnography. Interviews of approximately one hour in length were held in familiar and private places where interviewees felt comfortable sharing their thoughts away from other students or teachers. All participants had ample opportunities to share their thoughts and reflections from their experiences within a non-threatening environment where the guiding questions could be answered organically through informal discussion.

Insights from these participants were not meant to be representative of a larger population of activists, but rather, to provide insights into the specific motivations of a few actual student and adult activists whose views have much to offer scholars and policy-makers in this field. The interviewers' past experiences with collaborative youth antiracism work created an opportunity to share experiences reciprocally and to discuss at length some of the aspects of this work that are usually only shared within insular activist communities. During the data gathering stage, the researchers and participants utilized the *Diversity Toolkit* website http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dtoolkit , an award-winning resource developed by the researcher, to address specific instances of Internet resource and technology use. The site has already received over 190,000 hits, has won two national awards, and has been featured on several other social justice websites as a helpful vehicle for fostering the capacity of existing school activists.

Data Analysis

All interview data were transcribed, coded and analyzed, following the protocols of critical ethnography. Follow-up communication with research participants, and follow-up personal and on-line interviews were conducted as necessary to confirm the accuracy

of their accounts of their experiences and understandings.

Findings

I have been delighted with the robustness of the data set, and the tremendous insights that have emerged from the transcribed interviews. The guiding questions opened up a range of emergent themes around school activism, and related to the specific challenges and joys of engaging in this work in collaborations. More details on both the teacher and student interviews follow:

Findings from the Teacher Interviews:

Issues from this section of the data include insights on designing relevant activities to foster commitment, motivating students, seeking and negotiating administrative and colleague's support, and dealing with resistance, apathy and denial. An additional challenge to the activists' work in schools is the isolation felt by individual activists and the internal struggles associated with undertaking projects that address racism and other discrimination. One teacher, Rebecca, notes[3] the benefits of allowing opportunities for students to work with others: "One of the things I think is really important in doing retreats with kids is that they usually feel so isolated. They are working on really difficult social issues and are often really passionate about it, and they can feel really isolated." There is also shared concern between both adult and student participants that youth are not being taken seriously by the adult community.

Motivation for Initial Involvement

Many of the teachers with whom we spoke have taken up the challenge to promote social justice ideals in their daily practice, and others have gone further to help

students organize activist coalitions that challenge various forms of racism and discrimination. One goal of this research was to better understand what motivates teachers to get involved in antiracism initiative. The six teachers in this study were asked about what provided the initial spark for their involvement with young people in the field of social justice. Their responses varied but had common themes of their own education and training combined with contextual elements including their interactions with students, their involvement outside of school, and their own cultural identities.

Hugh says: "all of my activism work is in the classroom. I've been here for ten years, teaching Social Studies [and have] taught about every course in Social Studies from grades 9-12." Likewise, Rory is a Social Studies teacher whose interest in social justice was sparked outside of school but ignited by the energy and ideas of a group of students:

This happened five years ago. I had taken a sabbatical in 2001 and my wife and I went traveling. When I came back, something happened between me and that group of kids in that grade 11 class I was teaching. I don't know if it was a synchronicity thing or whatever. It just happened between us. I've always been interested in social justice and human rights and we had an *Amnesty International* group that I had started back in the '80s. I've always had an interest in the underdog to some degree. I'm an immigrant—I came to Canada from England. So even though you wouldn't know it from looking at me or speaking to me, I had memories of when I first came to Canada and I am very empathetic to people who have come from another country and deal with language and dress and cultural things.

His own identity as an outsider figures prominently in Rory's explanation of his motivation to undertake antiracist activism with his students. He says their interest in these issues was crucial in beginning the initial action project in his school.

Alexa also trained as a Social Studies teacher, with a background in history and geography. She is currently teaching media and technology studies at an all-girls private school in a larger city where she promotes social justice ideals and activism "beyond the school walls and beyond borders" with her students. Her activism has included promoting student participation in national antiracism contests, and her own ongoing involvement with an agency that addresses issues of child exploitation and the sex trade.

Martin describes himself as having a background in theology and philosophy, and was a youth minister in the Catholic system in an earlier career. His earliest work in antiracism took place in the early 1980s in Québéc, where he started a *World Peace Project* with the goal of "breaking down barriers of communication barriers" and exploring cultural and social justice issues. He also spent time in a Middle Eastern nation where he promoted antiracism with young people there. It is worthy to note that currently Martin is on a stress leave from his school district in a larger Alberta city, suffering from what he describes as "activist burnout."

Rebecca is not a formal classroom teacher but works with young people in a community group in a small Saskatchewan centre toward progressive social change. She cites her education as providing the impetus for her involvement in social justice issues:

> I initially did a degree in Humanistic Studies with a concentration in International Development and then I traveled for a couple of years, came back and got a teaching degree, and then worked up in Northern Saskatchewan for a couple of

years. And through all of that, I had an interest in diversity and in experiential education.

Likewise, Ellen works with the education system not as a classroom teacher but as a consultant and curriculum developer. As an Aboriginal woman she says she focuses on the systemic roots of racism, and her own identity is a key factor in her impetus for undertaking this work with schools. She has recently been commissioned by her provincial government to develop a toolkit for teachers, and to develop Aboriginal awareness workshops for educators and students.

Finding Relevant Experiential Methods

As many activist teachers have noted, engaging students in activities that promote social justice is sometimes a challenge. Young people are bombarded with a range of messages at school and in the media, and any number of community groups, businesses and programs continually seek their involvement. Adults seeking young people's interest and attention in tackling discrimination and oppression must compete with all of these agencies and find ways to maintain the relevancy of this work. One approach is to use role-play and other dramatic forms to explore and share ideas on social justice issues.

Rory, for example, reports that experiential activities such as drama with his high schools have been successful. He says:

Using drama… is getting kids to really look at the issues in their lives and getting them to tell each other about it. Because we're starting from their experiences and getting them to see alternatives and change things, it's really developing their leadership as well. That's the real thrust of the program.

Similarly, Rebecca finds her youth leadership with a community agency is more attractive to young people when it includes a fun and participatory element: "It's playful and so for kids it's very appealing. You can be doing something really serious and still be able to laugh together. But it's really about exploring, and it's about your experience and it's not going to be squashed." She also notes that there is a strong appeal among some teachers for "pre-packaged" activities, despite the drawbacks:

> People always appreciate concrete activities and for sure teachers really need and like that. In fact, we try to not give them too much of that because we want them to work with the students and figure it out. They may do a lot of replicating the same activities that we do at the training. There are benefits of that, but it can also only allow them to look in their own interests and then it becomes "cookie-cutter."

Rebecca recognizes that encouraging teachers to work collaboratively with their students will yield more relevant and engaging forms of activism.

Ellen's work has found her seeking approaches to engaging young females through highly experiential projects: "There are two goals; the first is to create awareness and the second to giving a hands-on experience rather than a classroom setting, and I think that's what worked a lot." One of her students has reported to her: "Instead of sitting in a classroom and reading books about it and the teacher talking about it—you don't learn like that—you actually go there and do everything, you actually learn more." However, formulating innovative and experiential projects involves taking additional risks, challenging accepted ideas and, as many of our participants discussed, may pose some daunting challenges.

Raising Awareness on Social Justice Issues

With any educational initiative, educators face the typical obstacles of making their lessons and activities relevant and motivating for students while raising awareness on issues they may not have previously considered. Alexa admits that at the beginning, "some of the projects just weren't effective… some of the messages were weak because some of the girls just didn't get that this [sexism and racism] is happening. Or it was such a weak message that if they think this is what racism is… it's because they're sheltered, or they don't see it, or they don't recognize it." Her relatively affluent female students did not have the life experiences to allow them to recognize various forms of racism or oppression, and had to be led more intentionally to a deeper analysis through particular teacher-generated activities.

Following the prescribed curriculum in Social Studies, which varies by province, may offer some ideal openings for teachers to address social justice issues; this relies heavily on the teachers' analysis and skills at integrating with the existing offerings. Alexa says "I think if something is going to be done, it has to match curriculum, which is difficult with Canada being provincially-driven curriculum; you'll never match curriculum across Canada. I think that everything that needs to be included has to be blended in. If it's an add-on, kids can see it as that and don't find nearly as much relevance to it." As many educators recognize, too much information coming from well-intentioned and well-informed teachers delivered "up front" may not appeal to students; as Martin says, "I think the biggest challenge is to not be too directive."

Motivating Students and Managing Disappointment

Many adult activists spoke of the difficulty of striking a proper balance between enthusiastically motivating students, and being overly directive with them. Ellen offers an assessment of this tension:

> Some people who want to hit people over the head with it and there are others who Whoa, we think this is the wrong way. So we're working to find a balance in it… You have to engage them in discourse where people can hear their story.

Likewise, Rory offers this account of trying to strike the proper balance of stimulating interest within his student activist group and the school population:

> One of the biggest challenges is making sure that when kids are going to do something, they actually do it—staying on their case. [One particular student] was part of group that wrote in the [antiracist] manual and in the manual she says "You've got to get in their face" and I agree with her. There is a fine line between being assertive and getting in their face and that's certainly a challenge—keeping the interest, the amount of time and effort and enthusiasm that's needed and it's certainly a challenge.

After generating a great deal of interest in the new social justice program during its initial school year, Rory reports that the students helped to promote it using word-of-mouth: "I think once you reach a critical mass, which the group had by the second year, it was selling itself. However the big challenge was keeping it alive, keeping it fresh."

Using collaborative approaches sometimes allowed activists to address aspects of these ongoing barriers to engaging more students. Allowing students to participate in planning and formulating social justice projects helped our participants to design activism

that could engage students and sustain their interest beyond the classroom. One challenge Martin reports "was to keep the kids connected… it's got to be meaningful in their lives. It has to have some sort of connection to whatever is running through their heads. Just [studying] racism is not enough… there has to be a lived experience of it." He says, "You don't want to tell them what to do—you want them to figure out what they see as racism in the community." When students were given a legitimate role in the planning and implementing of social justice initiatives from the outset, the resulting projects are far more successful at generating a sense of ownership and engagement.

Another challenge arises when events fail to live up to high expectations, and students can become demoralized if they have taken ownership of the initiative. Addressing this, Rory says he takes this as another opportunity to educate students on becoming resilient with their activism:

> That's another challenge; how much more do you do? What do you do? We plan these events and some of them are flops. I tell the kids that this is life and you have to roll with the punches and you can't be all things to all people.

Dealing with the failures and frustrations as well as the gains and successes seems to be an important part of sustaining interest and motivation in social justice activism. Young people who choose to strive for equity likely hold more idealistic views than their peers, and our participants reminded us of the importance of offering them various ways to deal with disappointment.

Facing Conservatism and Apathy

Another barrier raised by school activists is the growing political and social conservatism that many believe unfairly targets diversity and antiracism initiatives as part

of "belt-tightening" and budget cutting. Recent years have seen drastic reductions in funding to community groups that address social justice concerns, and to educational programming and materials countering inequity. Ellen expresses the frustration felt by many educators who have long been committed to these issues: "I'm really tired of begging governments for money to do things that are so fundamental to the well-being of our society, and anti-racism is not high on anybody's budget priorities." Likewise, Martin has found himself increasingly despairing over the perceived lack of support for marginalized students who were in serious need of help from the school system:

> Professionally, watching kids that were in real trouble and [there was] nothing
> you could do about it. Nothing. You made phone-calls to get someone to come in,
> but it was like phoning a brick wall. So you had kids who were in real difficulty
> and you just can't spend your whole time on one or two or 12 kids, when you
> have 37 of them. That caused the burn-out.

Martin's stress leave from the school district continues.

Dealing with student apathy or disengagement in social justice issues offers a unique set of obstacles for educators. Sometimes students' reasons for turning down opportunities to engage in activism seem straightforward. Rebecca notes that students' lives seem to be getting busier and busier: "I used to never find it difficult for students to miss a day of school or a couple of days of school, that has become far more challenging in the past year and a half of so and we're still trying to figure out why." Martin suggests "too much affluence" and the conservative political climate as other possible reasons for a lack of student involvement, and declares that "the problem, here, in my mind is that

there is no real political opposition in [this province… there is nothing to get young kids excited."

Hugh cites more pragmatic kinds of obstacles to undertaking successful activist projects, including an experiential program to raise awareness on refugee issues.

> The challenges are to be able to get enough volunteers to run it, to be able to get all of the okays from places like a provincial park, where you've got to get permits, meet with staff to lay out the course that you're going to use. You have to look at acquiring guest speakers, and some sort of funding in place to release teachers.

Of course, the more ambitious the project is, the greater these kinds of challenges for the teacher and student organizers.

Rocking the Boat: Seeking Administrative Support

Many school administrators are understandably cautious about school projects that draw attention to controversial or contentious issues such as racism, sexism and homophobia. While they may express genuine interest in promoting a positive learning environment in general terms, many school leaders resist initiatives that name sources of inequity and oppression for a variety of reasons. According to our participants in this research, this is a significant challenge for many school activists striving to raise awareness on these issues. Rebecca faces this challenge in implementing drama programs with high school students to promote human rights and responsible international development. She addresses the difficulty of maintaining the status of her program within the school from one school year to the next:

One of the huge challenges we've had this year more than other years is about the status of the program in the school system and they way that administration treats it. This is "integral" to everyone's education and needs to be in the classroom, and it needs to be in the curriculum… It has to go to the principal and there is such a variation of how principals deal with it, and their commitments to the importance of this program. I would say this is a really big challenge right now.

As Martin has found in his conservative provincial setting when he began addressing social justice issues with students, "here in Alberta, you were basically rocking the boat, and once you start rocking the boat that's leftward thinking…you either had to suck up or make enemies. I tended to make enemies." Perhaps it was his difficulty with the nuances of administrative diplomacy, but he notes that he confronted overt discrimination as well: "I had a couple of principals who were absolute bigots. They were uncomfortable with things we did." Addressing this resistance and finding creative ways to work within difficult contexts is an important and inevitable aspect of social justice work. As Hugh observes: "When you get the administration on board, the only backlash is from people who don't want to participate, and that's fine with us."

Dealing with Denial and Resistance

Further, Rebecca notes, there is also hesitance and resistance from teaching colleagues: "Even if it is in the curriculum, teachers can't teach everything. It's difficult when you're not just doing the superficial multiculturalism. When you start teaching anti-racism, it's difficult and a really big challenge to get teachers on board." She notes the discrepancy in the ability of her peers to recognize systemic racism: "It ranges immensely from people who live racism every day and have that sort of understanding of it, to

people whose response is that everyone needs to be nice to each other." Other research participants noted the tendency for their fellow educators to deny the existence of racism outright. One student who had recently graduated from a Manitoba school reported that teacher resistance inhibited her initial activist work in high school:

> Teachers didn't buy into it for a long time because they said they didn't have issues like that in their classroom. So they were like, "Why would I pretend these issues are here?" The Catholic School Board just started the [antiracist] program this year. We had tried to talk about it with them for about the past ten years and they always said that they didn't have such problems at their schools.

Addressing the denial of racism with teachers and students is a daunting challenge in Canada particularly. Alexa describes the widespread view held by many Canadians that racism is limited to individual attitudes and actions:

> There are people who believe that they're not racist because it comes out of a culture that doesn't want to addresses racism in a really fundamental way. We want to look at racism as an individual act of meanness, the name-calling. We really don't want to look at it as a power issue—because then we all have to. We still have structures and institutions built in this country that only serve certain groups of people.

Recognizing this culture of denial is an important first step, but addressing it in schools remains a challenge for many activists. Rebecca describes an initiative to educate the teachers before they participate in workshops with students, in "a mini version of what the students went through. We felt this needed to be a transformative experience for

teachers." She recognizes that all teachers are not at the same point in their awareness of social justice issues such as power and privilege:

> For some people it's going to be the first step and for some people it's way into their journey. It's about opening eyes and opening hearts and acknowledging that it's hard work every day. It's hard for all the white teachers that are involved. It's hard to know how to deal with all those privileges.

The researchers have also encountered and addressed the denial of racism in the activist work they have undertaken in schools for several years (Lund, 2006), and routinely shared their own experiences and insights with participants as part of the reciprocal value of conducting a collaborative research project.

Findings from the Student Interviews:

The interviewees ranged in age from 15-20 years old and came from two distinct camps; the first group can be broadly characterized as privileged middle to upper class youth, a majority of whom are white and who were introduced to this work through supportive activist parents. For example, this was the case with Amanda[2] and Stephanie, who commented that their families' activism background and antiracism dinner table conversation had been instrumental to their current social consciousness. Both Amada and Jason, whose father had been leading students in antiracism initiatives for the past 30 years in his role as a teacher, reflected that their engagement in this work felt like a natural progression in their learning and development, and neither could identify an "ah-ha" moment that led them to this work. Likewise, Maya said, "my personal belief is that people are shaped by their circumstance. So my family is heavily involved in all aspects

of our community… everyone in my family is really upfront about things like that, so they influenced me in taking initiative." This group of four students felt empowered and supported in all their pursuits and in all cases they expressed that they felt a duty to the work because of their heightened social consciousness.

The other three student interviewees came from much different backgrounds; they were either first generation Canadians or had immigrated to Canada and expressed that either they or their parents had personally experienced racism. These students often wove stories of their families and immigration into the mix of reasons that they were committed to antiracism work. Michael, who came to Canada as a refugee, said that exposure to poverty in his home country has made him realize that in Canada people suffer differently, and that being Black is a major impediment in Canadian society. He broke down while recalling a conversation: "We also talked about what it's like for new immigrants when they come to the country. How others make fun of them, how they pronounce the words… [crying]." Jasmine, like Michael, immigrated to Canada with her family and comments that, because she had lived in poverty in her home country, her commitment to antiracism work was simply "a way to give back."

The participants' level of analysis of the concepts of racism and integration varied greatly, ranging from a grounded understanding of the multiple and complex dimensions of racism and its social and political implications for immigrant and refugee students, to participants who were engaged in activism because of very personal, raw experiences. Although all students we interviewed understood that there was a need to challenge the status quo in terms of how racism manifests itself in Canadian society, their approaches

toward school activities ranged from more traditional multicultural sharing, to creating

awareness in safe and inclusive environments, to confrontational grass-roots action.

Creating the Sparks for Involvement

There are arguably as many personal reasons for getting involved in school social

justice projects as there are student activists. With this small but diverse group of student

leaders, their earliest interests in equity issues ranged from painful personal experiences

with racism and discrimination in Canada, to acting on global awareness of injustice, to

growing up within families that encouraged and promoted antiracism activism, to sheer

accident. For Michael, immigrating to Canada after his father died, his initial drive to

choose to work in a coalition to promote social justice was borne from his own lived

experience:

> The drive came from my personal education. I was raised in a really poor family
>
> and we didn't have much. We had to have faith and believe in God that we'd have
>
> food. You know in [my home country in Africa] people sell things on the streets;
>
> that's how we survived… But you weren't guaranteed an income. That's where
>
> my drive came from. I told my mom that there is a better life we can live.

Likewise, Jasmine, 19 years old, explained that her own experiences as an immigrant

sowed the earliest seeds of her activism. Reflecting on her life in her home country in the

South Pacific, she said, "we actually lived in poverty… so I know how hard it was. So

[through my activist work I am] just trying to give back to my mom." Jasmine also added

her more self-directed motivations for engaging in activism in schools, including her own

future academic and career advancement: "I think for me, it was just for myself… Maybe

for me, getting involved will give me a chance to get more of the school and staff—also,

to see where I'm going with my career. That's why I ran for [students' council] president, to see how far I could go with my skill." For both of these students, their experiences living in underprivileged, marginalized communities very much inspired their activist efforts in school.

Maya, a Canadian born 17-year-old of Indian descent, offered a similar personal account of the origins of her wish to foster acceptance and promote social justice ideals: "I think the turning point for me was when I went back and visited my parents' home towns in India and you just see the people on the street begging for money. Ever since then, I've had the idea that if I can help, I will." Maya's socially conscious parents, living in a larger city on the Canadian prairies, also encouraged her to learn more about global concerns and to take action. Like Jasmine, Maya also explained that the intrinsic gratification she has received from helping is a key motivator for her:

> The other half of it is that knowledge—knowing someone out there needs help
> and knowing that you can help them, the smallest way possible, probably [makes]
> the biggest difference to me, personally—the personal benefits that I gain from it.

She added that failing to act while having knowledge of injustice would cause her to feel guilty: "You know if I never did all the things that I do, I would feel this huge cloud of guilt. Knowing that you didn't help when you could have."

For the white mainstream students—and for those students of colour who came from families they described as being more affluent and upper- to middle-class—their expressed motivations for activism emerged more out of a middle-class, liberal Canadian value of wanting to help those less privileged, than by any personally experienced injustices. In many cases, family values and experiences also fostered their activism.

Born and raised in a small city in Alberta in a white, middle-class home, Stephanie had

traveled extensively but never to developing nations. The 20-year-old talked about what

initially got her interested in social justice activism:

> My mom has always had a real interest in this type of stuff and she made me read
>
> the newspapers… We always knew what was going on in the world. I wanted to
>
> do something but didn't know how to get involved; I knew what was going on in
>
> the world, but it was like, what do I do? I didn't know how to get into all those
>
> things.

Amanda, a white Canadian-born student from a city in Saskatchewan, now 20 years old

and studying at university, talked of her family's strong influence on her wish to become

an activist:

> I think it is mostly because of my family; my family has been activists in anti-
>
> racism so I had that support and had seen that from the time I was little. Before I
>
> became an activist myself, I'd seen and heard it and when you say about family
>
> making comments, my Dad taught in [a Canadian prairie city] for his whole
>
> career—he's a principal—and he taught mostly First Nations students so I knew
>
> them, beyond the stereotypes, from the time I was little. So I think it makes a
>
> difference when you know someone as a person and not just as a statistic.

Both of these students were made aware of suffering and injustice in the world by their

families, encouraged directly by their parents to be a part of the solution, and cited this as

a key motivator in their wish to become activists in school projects.

Jason, a 19-year-old from a large Alberta city, reported that he grew up in a

family for whom social justice activism was a way of life. He explained, "I don't

remember anything besides being involved. I don't know where the initial idea came from." For at least one other student, the activism was admittedly quite accidental, and stemmed from the filming of an antiracist themed video commercial for a class project. Soni, 15 years old, whose affluent and well-educated parents immigrated to a large Canadian prairie city from India, said that her reasons for getting involved were almost accidental; "I think we filmed it and wanted to do well and get a good grade and that was the main initiative. But then when we won, we thought of the different possibilities. Different schools had started calling us and asked us to show it to them, so after that it started building." However, she also said she was not interested in doing further activism on this topic after graduating high school. For differing reasons, these students each showed a varying level of commitment to social justice activism, and all have taken deliberate efforts to foster inclusion and acceptance of diversity among their peers. Their experiences with school activism are varied, as are their analyses and ability to articulate that work, but many of them share similar stories about the many challenges to undertaking social justice activism in schools.

Peer Resistance, Apathy and Acceptance

Specific challenges to the young activists' work in schools included a variety of social struggles with peers while undertaking projects that address racism and other discrimination. Throughout their interviews the students addressed the widespread apathy they noted among many of their peers toward issues of diversity. Michael said he struggled with "the students who don't really see the benefits of what we're doing. They think that it's just a waste of time and they just want to get out of school and relax and it's hard for us." Amanda remarked, "I would say the biggest challenge with dealing with

antiracism is dealing with the people who are quiet about it, so you don't get inside their head and you don't really know what they're thinking." Stephanie also encountered apathy when first trying to recruit for their school's social justice program, but only with certain segments of the student population: "Either they were into it and they were like, 'let's do something' or they didn't care. But it was all good. We actually had a few [student athletes] who were involved in it at the end. All cliques were involved in it." Talking about the same school, Samira recounted, "I guess the biggest challenge is getting [student] participation. I've actually never had trouble with people signing up; it's more getting the student body to participate."

Additionally, student participants brought up specific challenges of dealing with peers who do not seem to understand their deep commitment to social justice concerns. As Amanda recounted, taking a stand with peers on matters pertaining to racism or discrimination can come with negative consequences:

> I took a lot of harsh words from friends because they would make a joke and I'd be the one saying, "You know this isn't funny. Do you realize what you just said?" And so I think it was too much work for them; they didn't like that they couldn't just go out and have a good time because they knew that someone was listening to them. One friend in particular in high school would say, "Everyone stop talking, 'Love Everyone' is here" when I would walk into the room.

Being a young person comes with enough challenges as they make their way through secondary school, but to take on an activist concern for social justice issues added another layer to students' already complex social life.

Jasmine recounted her disappointment with some students who attended an awareness-raising event about refugee issues. She had taken an active leadership role in organizing a role-play experience and found that a few students had chosen to attend the workshop for the wrong reasons:

> My biggest challenge was that I heard some of the students saying, 'Oh we just wanted to come to this so we could skip school,' but I would try to get them into their roles. I was trying to get them to realize that this experience is very important. Some would say that they didn't know anything about refugees and just wanted to miss school, but at the end when I gave them letters from refugees, it was really effective.

Jasmine's perseverance and determination to educate her peers can serve as a helpful reminder of the need to persist; she is, in many ways, an admirable role model for teacher and community activists who may be tempted to give up with students they perceive as unmotivated.

Amanda said that she found that for social justice projects to be successfully implemented and sustained, there must be a certain level of peer acceptance. This often entailed efforts to "win over" the perceived student leaders. She explained how the "cool" factor can be crucial to a group's survival:

> The schools where there has been a stigma to [activism] haven't been successful… and this is why the first core group of students is generally chosen. We try to get teachers to choose a couple of the "cool" kids and a couple of the "nerdy" kids that maybe are bullied, and we try to keep it so that it is fairly

multicultural, so that it's not just a bunch of Caucasian people… In my school it was considered very successful, but also kind of a cool group to be a part of. Stephanie also recounted how the first generation of her school's social justice club benefited from being seen by students as something "cool": "The original kids who started it were the cool kids, so they were in that crowd anyways. It was like 'Oh, you're in [the social justice club]? That's awesome.' It was like the basketball team." These students' candid observations shine light on the complex hierarchies that exist within schools, and serve as reminders that any new school initiatives, even social justice clubs that seek to model equity and acceptance, must negotiate their own space within a school's complex social network.

For some students, their social justice efforts in school were met with overwhelmingly positive support. Erin's successful March 21 antiracism campaign attracted the attention of the outside media, and also her peers: "When they saw the effects that it had and that the people from 'Racism—Stop it' thought that it conveyed a good message, they felt good about it. And they were excited that it was going to be on TV!" With a similar success, Soni said that after the production of her antiracist video project was undertaken with the cooperation of the larger school population, "they were all our friends and they were really great and supportive about participating. I think the whole school really showed a great sense of support, before and after." The recognition was also a source of pride for her parents: "They were so proud! They framed the pictures from the [newspaper]. My Dad tells his patients!"

Likewise, Maya was buoyed by the many benefits to the school community, some unplanned, that emerged from their social justice project:

The main idea was to raise money for grad committee, but in the end something

more than that. And the kids in school, the ESL department specifically, really

benefited from it because they got to showcase their talents and watch other

people who had the same talents, but aren't necessarily in the same class. I think it

made them feel more accepted, knowing that their culture isn't one that is going

to have any racism against it. I think it really built up tolerance and a lot of people

supported it and a lot of the staff supported it as well.

Maya said that she found the acceptance she received at school for her leadership in a

refugee simulation project spilled over in a positive way to her home life: "I think once

you get recognition from your peers and from people at school and they let your parents

know, they start to realize that it's worth it!" Some of the challenges these activists said

they faced came from the adults in their community whose stereotyped or limited views

on young people frustrated their activist efforts.

Countering Negative Attitudes Toward Youth

There was a shared concern among our participants that youth are not being taken

seriously by the adult community. Stephanie observed, "People don't take you seriously.

You're a student, you don't care—they just don't take you seriously. It's actually really

frustrating… I tried to do something with [an international aid agency] and they were like

'Sorry, you're not qualified' and I would think, I want to volunteer, what does it matter?"

Her frustration with being marginalized or devalued due to her age was also evident in

Michael's account of his experiences. He recounted trying to address a diversity issue at a

meeting with teachers in his school: "I raised my hand and said that the majority of the

population in the school is the students, so if you're going to talk about change, why

don't you include us in the process? They looked at me and thought that I had a point." It takes moments of courage such as this for students to find and use their voices, in order to be taken seriously by adults and respected as valued collaborators in social justice activism.

When asked directly, many young people indicated that they wished to be involved in collaborative approaches to develop what Pruegger and Kiely (2002) call "youth created and directed solutions" to racism (p. v). Some young people actively seek greater involvement with an adult community that may be skeptical or unwilling to engage with young people. Stephanie noted that young people find themselves with a growing awareness of local and global injustices, but may become frustrated by what they perceive as adult indifference or inaction:

> Kids were noticing that something is going on. Things are happening in the world and they don't know what to do about it. They are growing up in a place where they were taught to something about it, even if it is racism. So I guess the students were ready for it, to have something in place, even if everyone else wasn't… I tried to talk to adults but they were like, who cares. So it was really nice to have an outlet.

Stephanie said that she felt disillusioned by the ultra-right-wing conservative federal politician who represents her riding, and expressed regret that her social justice group could not expect support from the political leadership in her region of Alberta:

> I think it would be really nice to have…not so much government support, but people like [our Member of Parliament] to come out, but he's Conservative, so it

wouldn't work! But anyway to have him come out and say, 'Oh this is good,' and

to pay attention.

Her expressed desire for greater support from the adult community—particularly her

teachers and the elected political leadership—serves as a clear call for more committed

adults to come forward and take an active role in working collaboratively with young

people in their efforts toward social justice.

For Michael, the adults within the school played a vital supporting role for student

activism, and he hoped they would become motivated by the students' successes: "If we

show other people the benefits of [our antiracist program] then the teachers and principals

will encourage us. I think teachers play a major role." Samira noted how helpful her adult

mentors had been in organizing social justice themed events: "It's always sort of a

challenge to plan these things—there is a lot of extra work and it's frustrating—but our

teacher did a lot of that." Engaging students in collective efforts toward social justice in

schools will entail more than having a token youth representative on a diversity

committee or conducting a limited student attitude survey. Building authentic

engagement and ownership involves teachers working alongside students in creating

opportunities for trusting relationships to develop within respectful and reciprocal

organizational structures (Lund, 2003b), and confronting the forms of racism that are

often imbedded in the views and experiences of white mainstream teachers (Marx, 2004).

Uses of Technology

A number of the students focused attention on the use of technology, and on its

potential applications and limitations, in their social justice work in schools. During

interviews, some students expressed hesitancy about the Internet as a primary source for

information and motivation for activism. Michael said that while he would "go there to research essays… personally, I don't go on the Internet to learn about multicultural situations." Likewise, Jasmine doubted the commitment of young people to integrate technology in their antiracist work: "Personally I don't think they would go on a website. They wouldn't go home and do that; they don't have the time to do that." When given the hypothetical scenario of a great antiracism website being shared with a large class of students, Maya speculated on the number of students who would go home and actually visit the website: "Five, if you're lucky. I know it's harsh, the reality is really harsh, but it's there. But those five kids do more than the other 25 kids. So you need five motivated kids for a hundred people who aren't motivated." Mathematical gymnastics aside, her observation reflects the reality that only a small percentage of students—or indeed any population in our society—will choose to engage in any kind of progressive social action.

When she was asked about the likelihood of students using the Internet for social justice research, Stephanie was somewhat more pessimistic about her peers: "The thing we have to unfortunately remember is that students are lazy. Whatever the easiest, they'll do, so it may have to be the easiest." Jason's experience countered this notion, and he told about the integral use of the Internet in an activist group with which he was formerly involved: "[As a group] we developed a website… pretty much talking about youth issues and teaching youth what their rights are… We also did a lot on Aboriginal youth and care" using the Internet.

Another promising indicator of the tremendous potential for the use of the Internet and other technology in engaging young people is that it holds a strong appeal to visual learners. As Daniel pointed out about what appeals to the students he knows: "It's easier

to watch something than to go and research something… I think we'll be successful in our job [antiracism activism] if there is something visual for people to see." Antiracism and multicultural scholars have just begun to realize the potential educational power of new technologies and the Internet. Gorski (2004) argues: "The Internet, when used thoughtfully, can complement multicultural teaching and learning in ways unfathomable without this technology. It can contribute to the realization of many of the most important principles of multicultural education" (p. 37). In global terms, the Internet has the potential to open up the whole world to students, connecting them to peers across national and geographic boundaries. Stephanie was asked what she would value most from an interactive website that could connect her with other students:

> Something else other than what I can learn in research. Something that I can't learn anywhere else… A live chat would be *amazing*, because there's no way you hear everything [that is happening] in Zimbabwe or Uganda or Rwanda, and how much of that is skewed? How much is Americanized? So if we have stories from whoever is there, and know what they're doing, it definitely helps.

She recognized the tremendous potential of shrinking our global village and increasing intercultural communication and awareness that many activists are discovering with the new forms of communication.

Just as Gorski (2004) argues that technology is not simply beneficial for its own sake, but that "its most important educational and multicultural contributions are those that connect people with people" (p. 47), Amanda recognized the interactive and social potential of technology. She argued that the Internet can offer much to enhance student initiatives and to provide a vital link between distant communities of young activists.

When asked if an interactive website or chat feature could facilitate antiracist projects among student activists, she replied,

> Oh definitely, especially if there was a message board or some kind of chat set up so that they can communicate with other kids doing similar type of work. I think one of the main things is getting kids connected as frequently as possible with other kids, so that they know that they're not the only ones out there—to keep them motivated. Or just to share ideas, because sometimes you do the same things over and over again.

Jasmine said that after her experiences with a particular awareness raising event, she sought Internet sources to supplement her knowledge on those specific equity issues: "For me it was more afterwards, going on a website and learning about the issues. I really got interested in it and wanted to know more."

Implications and Conclusion

Emerging themes from student and adult participants' insights have reflected and extended the original guiding ideas about how school practitioners experience and resist backlash, negotiate administrative support, and foster acceptance and commitment among students. Additional challenges to the activists' work in schools have included the isolation felt by individual activists and the internal struggles associated with undertaking projects that address racism and other discrimination. Student participants also brought up the challenge of dealing with family influences, and the desire for acceptance by peers while doing this work. The study also revealed both the student and teacher participants' experiences with the apathy they see toward issues of diversity. There was also shared

concern between both adult and student participants that youth are not being taken seriously by the adult community, which complicates their activism within social justice projects within schools. Other teacher themes about their challenges have included struggles with student recruitment and active involvement, and with finding effective ways to use technology in their activism.

The interview data from our youth participants revealed that student activists are excited to talk about the work that they are doing and express the importance of taking their activism work outside of their communities. Even when sharing the significant barriers and obstacles to the work, the students remained optimistic overall. As Amanda expressed it: "I think that the challenges are also the good things. I think when you confront those challenges and are able to overcome them is the best thing. If you weren't able to overcome any of the challenges, you wouldn't continue with this type of work." Amanda noted some observable improvements in her high school's climate regarding her peers accepting formerly marginalized students: "One thing we hear from kids is that people just get along better and that everyone's friends with that First Nations girl now. They're not scared to talk to her." Likewise, for Maya, it was sometimes the small changes she noticed that made her work worthwhile. She recalled the observable positive outcomes of a recent awareness raising activity: "I think it was seeing the reaction on their faces... We also got a lot of the shyer kids voicing their opinions."

Each of these emerging themes from students' insights reflected our original guiding ideas about how school activists initially get involved, how they use technology in their antiracism activism, experience and counter resistance from peers and adults, and foster acceptance and commitment among their fellow students. Together, these accounts

and analyses offer a revealing glimpse into the lived experiences of racism and the efforts of those who try to challenge it from within schools in communities on the Canadian prairies. Following up on these initial findings with further studies of young people engaged in activism in Canada will offer implications for curriculum development, professional development for educators, teacher education, educational policy and government antiracism policies. By acknowledging and studying their efforts we are answering Dei and James' (2002) call to educators to "enable students to use their individual collective agencies to work for change that furthers equality, thereby enriching an strengthening our social fabric" (p. 83).

These student activists told us they were excited to talk about the antiracism work they do, and expressed the importance of working collaboratively with adults and taking this activism outside of their communities. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges expressed by our young interviewees revealed potential areas we hope to explore more deeply as we analyze the intersections of attitudes and practices with their adult counterparts. The researchers look forward to sharing further findings and analyses of data from the teacher participants as the study continues to unfold.

Throughout the project the researchers also noted how enthusiastic the teacher activists were to reflect on their work, and all expressed the importance of incorporating their activism both inside and outside of school settings. Even when talking about the serious barriers and obstacles to their work, the participants remained optimistic overall about the importance of this work. Further studies will be needed to determine some possible effective approaches to preventing and dealing with "activist burn-out."

Each of the emerging insights from participants echoed our own ideas about how school activists initially get involved, engage students experientially in activism, experience and counter resistance from peers and students, and foster acceptance and commitment in the face of a denial of racism and other forms of oppression. We hope these accounts and analyses provide an important look into the lived experiences of activism and the efforts of those who undertake social justice efforts within schools in communities on the Canadian prairies. Further studies of teacher and student activists will inevitably continue to offer implications for curriculum development, professional development for educators, teacher education, educational policy and government antiracism policies.

Overall, the researchers found that both teachers and student activists were excited to talk about the work they are doing and have expressed the importance of taking their activism work outside of their communities. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges revealed through this research point to numerous potential areas to explore more deeply as we continue to analyze and report the intersections of attitudes and practices from these results.

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Student Involvement: Research Assistant

I was fortunate to acquire Maryam Nabavi as my Research Assistant (RA) for the duration of this project. She is not currently enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Calgary, but has earned an undergraduate degree at this university. Some tremendous assets she brings include her extensive experience in the social justice field, and that she has lived and worked overseas, and has earned a Master's degree in Community Development from OISE/UT. In addition, Maryam was the former Youth Coordinator of the *Youth Reach Out Against Racism (ROAR)* program in Calgary, and is a member of the *National Youth Antiracism Network*. She currently works as a Community Planner with the United Way of Calgary. Through this project she has continue to hone her already strong skills as a writer, interviewer, presenter and experienced antiracism scholar and activist.

Attachment: Dissemination of Research Findings

One of my goals was to link these findings to leading theoretical literature and recent research in this field. Another was to build the research, writing and presentation skills of my RA. Findings from this research have already been reported to our colleagues in a number of academic and professional settings. The grant resources allocated for these conferences exceeded my initial budget projections but have been an invaluable phase of the research project. Far less time and money was spent on data analysis and transcription than intended, so a conscious decision was made to allocate more of the funding toward dissemination of the research findings. In every presentation and in each publication, acknowledgement of PCERII funding was highlighted and included in all conference proceedings.

Together, my RA and I prepared three academic conference proposals for two national conferences and one international conference, all of which were accepted. All three of the conference presentations have been published or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed conference proceedings. These presentations and publications have also led to a number of exciting networking and collaborations with colleagues that will continue to extend this research agenda. We have prepared and continue to revise several co-authored reports and manuscripts on this project; we have already submitted one book chapter and one scholarly manuscript for publication, and are preparing at least two more articles to be submitted to leading journals for peer review.

In addition, both the RA and I have also shared insights from our research more informally with a number of audiences including 11 educators in a graduate seminar taught by the researcher, EDER 657.04, entitled, "Social Justice Activism in Education."

The researcher and RA have discussed the research and addressed these findings as part of presentations at numerous other professional and academic gatherings in the past two years. The coming year will see further dissemination and presentations at Metropolis and other conference presentations, and in variety of publications of the results.

Please see the listing below of publications and presentations emerging directly from this research.

Publications and presentations directly emerging from this research project

Articles in refereed journals:
Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (submitted). Understanding student activism to foster social justice in Canadian prairie schools. *Equity and Excellence in Education.*

Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (in revision). Teacher activists challenging racism in Canadian prairie schools.

Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (in revision). Students and teachers tackling social justice issues on the Canadian prairies.

Book chapter:
Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (in press). Collaborating respectfully with young people: A duo-ethnographic inquiry. In L. Goulet, W. Linds, & A. Sammel (Eds.), *Effective practice of adult-youth engagement in social and environmental justice.*

Published academic conference proceedings:
Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (in press). School activism fostering acceptance in prairie schools. *Proceedings of "Immigration and Canada's Place in a Changing World, The 8th National Metropolis Conference.* Vancouver, BC: Metropolis.

Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (2006). Social justice projects in Canadian prairie schools: Teachers and students challenging racism. *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Education* (pp. 4134-4149), Honolulu, HI.

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Conference presentations:
Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (2006, March). *School activism fostering acceptance in prairie schools*. Paper presented as part of a workshop entitled "Immigrant Youth in Canada: Urban and Rural Experiences with Racism," at "Immigration and Canada's Place in a Changing World," the 8th National Metropolis Conference, Vancouver, BC.

Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (2006, January). *Social justice projects in Canadian prairie schools: Teachers and students challenging racism.* Paper presented at the Fourth International Conference on Education, Honolulu, HI.

Lund, D. E., & Nabavi, M. (2005, November). *Engaging young people in challenging racism: Social justice projects in prairie schools*. Paper presented at "Speaking With One Voice: Cross-Cultural/Antiracism Education Conference," University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Budget report:

Please see the attached official printouts. As mentioned above, the costs of travel for dissemination in the second year exceeded budget projections. The reduced amount spent on data gathering and analysis allowed for the judicious reallocation to dissemination travel for three remarkable conferences. Papers presented at two national conferences and one international conference in 2005-2006 allowed for the sharing of research findings and the establishment of some productive and tangible national and international linkages with fellow researchers, policy analysts, educators and activists.

I have appreciated the support of PCERII for funding this project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Darren E. Lund, Ph.D.