

Academy for Peace & Liberation Education: Final Report



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Introduction

*I began the research for this project in July 2018. Having studied educational systems at the University of Kansas, I thought it important to examine information that had been explored in earlier projects. I began by looking at a collection of questions and inquiries into the project of the **4CB (Peace School) Advisory Group*** created by a group of individuals in January 30, 2016. The document addressed concerns and needs for exploration in the community. Many of the questions in that document were utilized in the creation of the Listening Project Questionnaire conducted by Academy for Peace and Liberation Education (A4PLE) interns. My next step in conducting this research was to study the Listening Project Manual for LP Trainers and Organizers edited by Herb Walters and Geoff Huggins and published by Rural Southern Voice for Peace. This document informed the training that was conducted later with Listening Project interns.*

The next step in my project was to assist with the search for interns to conduct the interview portion of the Listening Project. The criteria for choosing interns included being between 11th grade and sophomores in college and having some connection with Chester, PA, either through their involvement with the 4 Circles Beyond Peace Leadership and Arts Camp or through schooling or residency. While searching for interns, I was also conducting research on potential schools on which to model curriculum and instruction. At the end of August I concluded my research and began the challenging task of collating the information which is contained in this document. I hope that it will provide enlightenment as well as guidance on next steps and improvements of the process.

Tai Amri Spann-Ryan, Consultant in Research and Curriculum Development

**Present: Niyonu Spann, Foluke Bennett, Robyn Richmond, Winifred Gilbert, Rashid, Rev. Bernice Warren, Adrienne Pancoe Cormier, Deborra Sines Pancoe, Judith Shea, Darlene Walker, Wanda Moore*

Research and Curriculum Development

Introduction

The work for researching curriculum development for the Academy for Peace and Liberation Education focused on the central question:

If liberation is the purpose of our high school education, what must be included in the curriculum, programming and what must be the instructional methodology?

The following were also examined:

- Where/how is this taking place currently?
- What institutions or communities should we visit to learn more?
- What are some of the primary challenges being faced by people who have established aspects of liberatory education?
- What can we learn by looking at culture - values, beliefs, symbols etc.?

I documented some educational communities in order to begin to answer these questions, but first I think it important to look at some of the baseline definitions of Liberation Education.

- Paolo Freire (1921-1997), educator-philosopher and a champion of education for liberation offers the following definition:

“Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it.”

- The Association of American Colleges and Universities offers a modern interpretation, stating:

*A liberating education has surprisingly diverse attributes.
From it, students gain the confidence needed to take initiative,
solve problems, and formulate ideas.
They develop skills, in language, learning, and leadership. They also learn about
domestic and foreign cultures, history, mathematics, science, and technology.*

The truth of the matter is that there are aspects of Liberation Education evident in numerous institutions. However, in this portion of the document I will focus on a few that have been particularly inspiring to my work and the work of the interns in the A4PLE Listening Project. The following section will only look at examples of school settings that practice liberating education but will not be limited to high schools only.

Communities of Liberating Education

As stated above, there are several aspects of liberating education that can be observed in a plethora of educational institutions, and it may even be argued that all schools can have aspects of liberating education. The following is a short list of schools that could be considered to have liberating education as a central focus. Khan Academy is perhaps an exception but is important to this study because of what it represents in the shifts of pedagogical considerations for the future of schools for everyone, regardless of socio-economic status and geographical location.

Where/how is this taking place currently?

- ☐ Imhotep Institute Charter School
- ☐ Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter
- ☐ James and Grace Lee Boggs School
- ☐ Rose in the Concrete School
- ☐ Khan Academy
- ☐ Global Village School

Imhotep Institute Charter School



Imhotep Institute Charter School represents a type of “state of the art” education that comes through adherence to what has come to be known as 21st Century Best School Practices. While the model of schooling at Imhotep may be a far cry from what A4PLE will be representing in Chester, Imhotep stands firmly in what it calls the “African Centered Principles” of Ma’at and Nguzo Saba. Perhaps more importantly, on the list of above schools, Imhotep is the only one to focus solely on high school students.

Imhotep offers a familiar educational philosophy of a “rigorous, integrative [and] constructivist curriculum” and adheres to the following principles:

- Provide an environment in which students assume responsibility and accept consequences for their actions
- Promote a safe, calm and disciplined environment in which students can discover and develop their talents
- Recognize that education is a process that allows the student to integrate knowledge with life experience
- Instill an appreciation that the search for knowledge is a life-long journey
- Empower students to recognize their needs and utilize resources effectively to solve problems
- Foster a spirit of unity
- Provide opportunities through various activities for our students to become responsibly reliant, resourceful members of the world community
- Create and foster the spirit of truth, justice, harmony, balance, order, reciprocity, and propriety (Ma'at)
- Create and foster the spirit of unity, self-determination, collective work, responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith (Nguzo Saba)

And while Imhotep is most certainly an example of a fairly traditional school in African garb, the focus on the history and culture of African heritage is important as a consideration for the future of A4PLE.

Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter



Sankofa shares much in common with its sister school, Imhotep, with “African centered and culturally responsive methodologies” prominent on both webpages. However, Sankofa presents a different atmosphere - not so much the “state of the art” picture of modern education, but rather the bright vibrancy of the rainforest; much more of the feel Africa, both in its affect and the colors used throughout. My bias towards Sankofa may be most evident because it is the school on this list that I had the opportunity to explore for the purpose of this report.

Sankofa has the advantage of having much in common with vision of A4PLE. Residing in the historically impoverished and economically under-resourced neighborhood of Kensington, Philadelphia with a charismatic founder and CEO - (an African American Quaker, Dr. Mama Ayesha Imani) - Sankofa seemed to me to be much more akin to a sister of A4PLE than any other school on this list. Firmly rooted in principles of both Maat and Nguzo Nane as well as Nguzo Saba, Sankofa Academy practices, symbols and rituals are evident throughout the school, including rites of passage and chant-like pledges. And while African pedagogy is centered, the purpose of learning is always guided towards the Freedom of African peoples.

The James and Grace Lee Boggs School



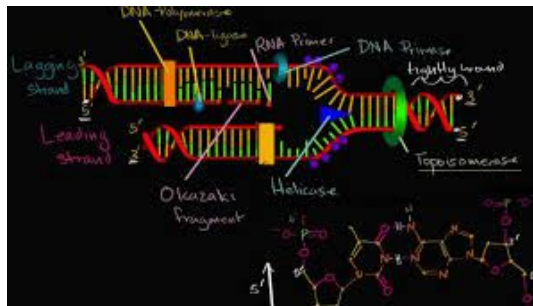
The James and Grace Lee Boggs School in Detroit, Michigan is a school that I believe A4PLE will most resemble at its inception. While it is a K-8 school, it is much smaller than Imhotep and even Sankofa, and was begun as a community-based, rather than a leader-based model. At the core of the identity of the Boggs School is Place-Based Education, which while on its face may not be as liberation oriented as the African Centered schools of Imhotep and Sankofa, still allows for a mission that states, *"The mission of the Boggs School is to nurture creative, critical thinkers who contribute to the well-being of their communities."* The Boggs School also focuses less on racial identity and more on community-based initiatives. With a staff well under 50, I would highly recommend a visitation to this school just to see how it has been able to sustain its workload.

Rose In The Concrete School



Deriving its name from the book of poetry based on the writings of Tupac Shakur, Rose In The Concrete School is an example of a school started for the purpose of ending murders in the neighborhood of East Oakland, California. While its mission states, “*Our primary goal is to develop youth committed to lives characterized by self-discipline, integrity, love and hope in the pursuit of justice and equity for all communities,*” founder Jeff Duncan-Andrade’s [Ted Talk](#) also indicates that the purpose of the school is to educate students who will stay and contribute to their communities. While their website gives far less information about their pedagogy than previous examples, it is the only school on this list that has a structure not associated with the public or charter school system.

Khan Academy



Not a school, per se, Khan Academy represents the current trend of free distance and/or teacherless learning that is being utilized in schools and communities around the world. On their website are lessons on everything from basic grammar to quantum physics. I include it on this list because in considerations of curricular and staffing structures, Khan Academy can represent the bridge between small and larger staff structures. For example, in the Montessori learning structure, teachers give shorter lessons and require students to continue basic practice while allowing space for as much exploration in a certain subject as they choose. In considering A4PLE, this same structure could be adopted with utilization of restricted Khan Academy curriculum.

Global Village School Curriculum



EDUCATING FOR A BETTER WORLD, ONE PERSON AT A TIME

Also a curriculum and not a school, Global Village School will be explored in greater detail later in this document, but it needs to be included in the section on schools for further consideration.

Primary Challenges Faced

The largest challenge faced would definitely be funding for the new school. That is why, of the four physical schools exemplified in this document, only one was not a charter school. Charter schools have the advantage of drawing from federal school funding and even the one school that is not a charter is a non-profit and not a private school. In discussing this topic with Dr. Mama Ayesha of Sankofa Freedom Academy, she informed me that while she would have loved to be free of the charter-public school system, she did not feel she had the ability to raise the capital to offer a private school education that would have been tuition free as would be needed for the population that she was working to serve. Of course in Chester, PA, the creation of charter schools would pose its own problems. In larger cities like Philadelphia, Detroit and even Oakland, a charter school could open with little objection from the community but, were one to open in Chester, many of the local residents would openly resist. And while a private school has advantages in autonomy, I have questions about viability.

Another challenge faced by schools teaching liberation education is the balance of pedagogy. While these schools all attempt to focus their pedagogy in ways that differentiate them from the strictly public school system, they vary in their ability to apply pedagogy that is not standardized and Eurocentric. Perhaps this can be best observed in the differences between Imhotep Academy and James and Grace Lee Boggs School, the former behaving much more like an Ivy League high school and the latter like a grassroots community school. It may be that both are attempting to survive in their own social contexts and that Imhotep needs to appeal to those who want a college-like environment and the Boggs School is appealing to those who shun the private school like atmosphere. Nevertheless, what is needed shifts according to the needs of the community.

Chester is unique in that much of the challenge may lie in community resistance to new forms of school. Even interns engaged in the Listening Project faced, and took on, a great deal of resistance to the idea of a school focused on peace and liberation. A big concern was whether or not there were enough students and enough funding for another school. This scarcity mentality is one that will have to be confronted in order to move forward with the project.

What can we learn by looking at the culture - values, beliefs, symbols etc.?

Photos from the visit to Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter provide excellent examples of how to enhance pedagogical understanding.

Not only was Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter covered in color and quotes by famous individuals, but many of the images on its walls were modeled after students. This practice was a literal representation of allowing the students to be fully seen by their community and for students to see and reflect upon themselves as learners:



There was something startling and empowering about seeing a flag in a school hallway that was not the American flag but represented a cultural heritage:



LP Interns discussed whether or not school uniforms were a form of liberation or not, but seeing dashiki uniforms definitely left the impression that indeed school uniforms could be liberating:



Art and musical representation was evident throughout the school that represented a multitude of cultures, including European, African and Latinx:





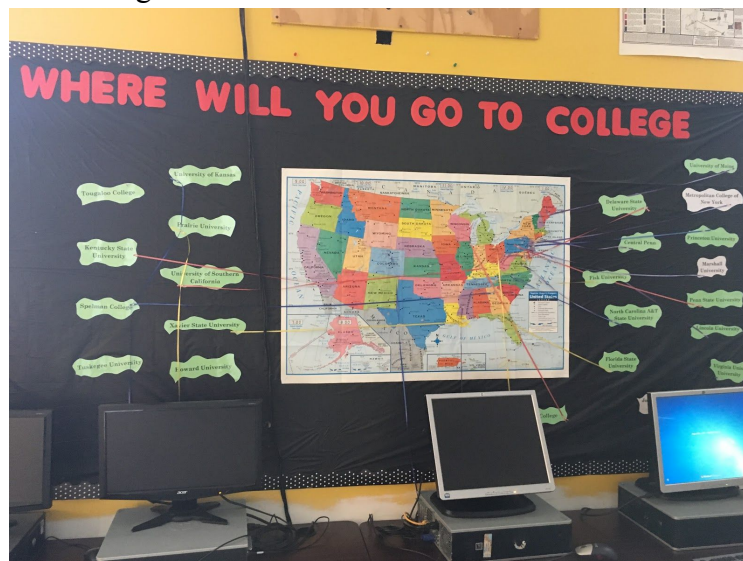
Continuing applying alternative art curriculum, there was represented expressions rarely seen in schools, observed in these photos of fusion fashion design:



Physical health and well-being were also shown to have priority in the unique and intentional gym layout.



Finally, college and career readiness were stressed throughout the school through displays that invited engagement and dialogue:





Potential Staff Formations & Processes:

Global Village

In my research, I have yet to find a program that matches the offerings of The Global Villages School (GVS). As an accredited distance learning program, it provides school records, curriculum and teacher support and has a mission to be “*an international K-12 homeschool diploma program with a creative, flexible approach and an emphasis on peace, justice, diversity, and sustainability.*”

The services offered by GVS are as follows:

- 1) Accredited [High School Curriculum](#)
- 2) [Teacher Support for Classes](#)
- 3) [Learning Style Profiles](#)
- 4) Personalized Curriculum Plans
- 5) Transcript Review
- 6) School Consultations

The advantage of Global Villages School support is that it allows for full curriculum and student development without the need for a fully staffed school and can take on the role and responsibility to record and track student progress.

Global Village School High School Diploma Program offers the following components:

Core Courses

- English
- Social Studies
- Science
- Math
- Foreign Language
- Fine Arts
- Computers
- Health & PE

Peace, Diversity & Sustainability Studies

- Human Rights
- The History of Civil Rights in America
- The Peacemakers
- Global Spirituality and Activism
- Literature of Diversity
- The Buddhist Path to Peace
- World Religions

Tuition & Service Fees

Global Village School has the following tuition and service fees:

Tuition Per Student**High School**

Groups of 1-4	\$300
Groups of 5-9	\$275
Groups of 10-19	\$250
Groups of 20+	\$225

Senior

Groups of 1-4	\$475
Groups of 5-9	\$450
Groups of 10-19	\$425
Groups of 20+	\$400

Student Portfolios

Per Student	\$35
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Annual School Registration Fee

Per School Year	\$350
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Learning Style Profiles

Per Student	\$35
Groups of 5+	\$30

Transcript Review

Per Student	\$50
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Consultations

Half Hour	\$45
$\frac{3}{4}$ Hour	\$65
Hour	\$80

School Application Fee

Non-Refundable	\$125
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Listening Project: **Academy for Peace & Liberation Education**



Introduction

In the introduction to this research project, I explained that recruitment of interns for the Listening Project began in July, approximately a month before the internship began. I would like to explain in greater detail how that process went. Obviously, a month is not a great amount of time to conduct recruitment. We had 6 interns at first, which eventually became 5 after one participant neglected to fulfill his duties, and there are a few places where I believe this internship could have been enhanced had we had more time for recruitment and a wider net had been cast. As it was, I believe that we gathered the individuals that were needed at that particular stage of the process, however, I do believe that for greater success moving forward, we might consider finding ways of expanding on the demographics of individuals who participate in the ideological construction of A4PLE.

There were three methods of recruitment employed for the A4PLE Interns.

- An advertisement was placed in the local paper, The Chester Spirit (print and on-line). Of the 6 responses that we received, two of them came from individuals who were not previously associated with the Peace, Leadership and Arts Camp and so this advertisement could be seen as being partially successful. Given more time, word of the mouth could be more effective.

- Foluke Bennet, the former director of the 4CB Peace and Arts Camp, and Mai Sankofa Spann-Wilson, current director of the camp, sent out emails and made phone calls to previous camp participants.
- Finally, as a consultant in research and curriculum design, I attempted to reach out to community members of Latinx and Asian descent. To reach out to the Asian community, I contacted the Korean Community Development Services Center in Philadelphia as well as the Multicultural Family Services Center in Upper Darby, PA. To reach out to the Latinx community, I contacted the Hispanic Resource Center in Chester, PA. Unfortunately, I was not successful in my attempts. I believe that my success was hampered by the fact that I was not on location at the time and that in order to reach out to those communities, someone would have to visit them in-person. The amount of time between contact and the start of the internship may have affected the success as well, however, in the case of the Hispanic Resource Center, that is only open on Wednesdays, it seems highly likely that emergency or in-person appointments would receive priority over returning phone calls. Nevertheless, with Spanish speakers being 9% of Chester's population, I believe it essential that at least Latinx communities be reached for participation in future A4PLE projects and school attendance. It is unclear how much of the population of Chester is Asian, however, through conversations with interns, what is clear is that stigmatization and negative perceptions of Asians and Asian Americans persist. Reaching out to these communities will be beneficial for combating these stereotypes and ensuring that this school is accessible and inclusive as possible.

I stated earlier in this document that in preparation for the internship I read through the *Listening Project Manual for LP Trainers and Organizers* edited by Herb Walters and Geoff Huggins and published by Rural Southern Voice for Peace. This manual was essential in building the A4PLE Internship. I also found that the *Help Increase the Peace Program Manual* by American Friends Service Committee was also important in conducting team-building activities. *The Listening Project Manual* could serve as a resource for future research and, as the manual states, I believe that research could be enhanced with the inclusion of a fully-trained facilitator.

Training

The A4PLE Internship began with a three-day training at Temenos Retreat Center in West Chester, PA. The purpose of the training was to help the interns interpret the purpose of the Listening Project and to build a sense of camaraderie so that we could identify good working partnerships for conducting interviews. Temenos was chosen because of the relationships built through the Peace, Leadership & Arts Camp.

Foluke Bennett and Niyonu were both present in the beginning of the internship. They offered their perspectives on shifts that were occurring with the program from the previous year and spoke about the future of the Peace School. As Foluke and Niyonu added grounding in the ongoing work of the building of A4PLE, Mai and I worked on building a program that would address the immediate concerns of training interns. Mai provided team building exercises and transitional activities while I focused on orienting interns to the task of conducting qualitative research through interviews.

The goals and philosophy of the Listening Project are as follows:

Listening Project Goals

1. To build organizational partnerships and coalitions
2. To work to achieve community-based goals
3. To commit to listening, nonviolently, and to encourage grassroots empowerment
4. To carry out a Listening Project
5. To do this through community interviews and active listening
6. To build trust and strengthen relationships
 - a. “The listeners, of course, have their own ideas but they aren’t going to impose them on anybody. They know that the best way to address issues and solve problems is to reduce polarization and increase understanding.”
7. To produce results the organization can use in achieving its long range goals

Listening Project Philosophy

Four Principles:

1. Every human being has the potential for good and has a piece of the truth
2. Every person can contribute to the betterment of our world
3. There is power and importance in positive human relationships
4. Deep listening is not only a skill, but is also a spiritual process that should be done with empathy, compassion and nonviolence.

Philosophy of Basic Human Needs:

All human beings need to...

1. Feel Valued
2. Trust us in order to share truthfully and openly
3. Find our own path to change
4. Feel encouraged, empowered and supported when we try to turn our concerns into action

Because of the complexity of these concepts, we found the need to continuously come back to them throughout the internship, to ensure that students were adhering to a Listening Project that fulfilled these goals and philosophies.

The Listening Project Training at Temenos ended with practice interviews which allowed both trainers and interns to observe and comment on how well interviews were conducted and methods for improvement. They also allowed participants to have a deeper understanding of the mission and vision of the project to build the Academy for Peace and Liberation Education.

Interns



The Academy for Peace and Liberation Education Listening Project originally consisted of 6 interns. Prior to selection, interns completed an online application, submitted a writing sample and recorded a video expressing their goals and intentions for inclusion in the internship. I have considered the views and opinions of the interns because I believe they should inform the work moving forward. Below is a list of the interns involved in the Listening Project:

Darren Ford
Anisa Freeman
Christian Neal
Jannah Islam
Mekhia Sterling
Ciani Hodges



Darren Ford

Darren Ford was one of three high school graduates in the program and was the only intern not to finish the project. It was clear, even in his application, what some of his strengths and challenges might be. His writing submission was a beautifully constructed poem, however, the rest of his application was filled with glaring grammatical mistakes, such as missing punctuation and incomplete thoughts. However, his involvement with the Peace & Leadership Arts (PL&A) Camp, and also his identity as one of the only other men in the project, made him a necessary component to the group. Indeed, Darren added a great deal of energy and flavor to the internship, but he was always half in and half out. On our trip to Temenos he was the only intern not to turn in a Registration & Commitment Form, and after our return to Chester he never contacted the trainers or even Foluke and Niyonu who had had prior relationships with him. I believe Darren represents a non-committal element of Chester that must be dealt with, because the truth is that we were never able to discern what it was that caused him to disengage. Moving forward, these mysteries must be sussed out for they are a detriment to the success of the school.



Anisa Freeman

Anisa Freeman was another high school graduate. She attended Chester's STEM Academy and was very proud of the fact and believes very strongly in a teacher's ability to provide students with what they need to succeed in life. I had the opportunity to ride with her to Temenos where she discussed incessantly with Mekhia her views on Historical Black Universities (HBUs). I found Anisa to be very surprising in that my first impressions of her were that she was not engaged in the work and really didn't understand its scope. This was because during the training she spent a great deal of time on her cell phone, a habit I later discovered she is aware of and wants to stop. By the end of the internship I came to understand that Anisa was deeply reflecting on the information given to her as she often had the most profound responses to questions and was one of the most intellectually and thought provoking contributors to our conversations. This was most clearly in evidence when visiting Sankofa Academy she was one of the only interns to respond to questions posed by Mama Ayesha and afterwards expressed a desire to have the same effect on students as the teachers within the school.



Christian Neal

Christian was the high school intern who expressed the least amount of connection to the Chester community. While he had attended the PL&A Camp with Foluke and Mai, he had never lived in Chester but rather lives in Clifton Heights and attends school in Upper Darby. Christian had one of the weaker application submissions but was admitted to the program after revising his form and including a writing sample. I noticed a lack of passion in his video submission as well but was informed by Mai and Foluke that Christian has a good heart and willingness to participate that made him a worthy candidate. While I do not regret his inclusion in the internship, partially because I believe it important to have a group that represented multiple identities, and Christian being the only male intern to stay with the program was seminal, I do not feel that Christian ever fully grasped the importance of the work that he was doing or ever fully understood what impact it could have. He left never really expressing what his perspective was but seemed only to repeat perspectives garnered from interviews and stated by other interns.



Jannah Islam

Jannah was a high school student who had very strong connections to the Chester community. Most of the family members that she has a connection to live in Chester and she expressed a strong desire to connect as much as possible to the community. She attended Archbishop John Carroll High School, a private school outside of Chester, but spoke frequently about how out of place she felt there and about her desire to be fully seen and appreciated. She lamented the fact that her students often only had negative perspectives to share about Chester, and sought opportunities to prove them wrong. She was focussed and rarely required redirection.. She did not attend the PL&A Camp and often presented her thoughts and ideas in a matter of fact manner. Nevertheless she exhibited an incredible ability for growth and understanding and was a model intern.



Mekhia Sterling

Mekhia was the only intern who was currently attending Chester High School. Like Jannah, she was highly motivated and engaged in all discussions and attempted to do her best at every endeavor. Unlike Jannah, however, she seemed to have a great deal of external circumstances that inhibited her ability to be fully engaged. After a couple tardy incidences, Mai and I discovered that part of what was making her late was the fact that her parents provided her transportation and were often too busy arguing. Her home life also affected her engagement, in that she was often tired because her parents' arguing had kept her awake. Despite her situation, Mekhia exhibited incredible emotional maturity, recognizing her triggers and visibly working on controlling her own temper. She also appeared to use her parental examples as motivation to do better with her life. It would seem that at the Academy for Peace and Liberation Education would be designed for students just like her, who not have the opportunities but do have the will to be their best selves.



Ciani Hodges

Ciani, like Anisa, was preparing to begin her second year in college. She also attended school at Archbishop John Carroll High School and strongly identified as a member of the Chester community, going so far as to say that she could not picture herself ever moving away from Chester. The first impression of Ciani is that she is a very cheery and sociable woman who is proud of her accomplishments and driven to be her best. While all of these things are true, it is also true that Ciani has family troubles that sometimes made it hard for her to fully engage in the work and at times exhibited a difficulty in believing in the validity of the Academy. Her questioning of whether or not an Academy should be started did not come out until after relating interviews with educators and community members who expressed the perspective that instead of starting a new school we would should instead start a community center and work on improving the school that we already had. It is unclear to me whether or not she had these views before the interviews or if her perspective was influenced by the the strained relationship she has with her father and her mother, whom she told me was getting checked for cancer during the internship. Nevertheless, Ciani represented the intense resistance that many in Chester may have towards a new school.

Guest Speakers

We attempted to invite speakers who might enhance the perspectives of interns and provide them with a deeper and richer understanding of the project and of Chester as a whole. Some of the speakers were interviewed, while others gave short workshops.

Interviewed Guests

Brother Larry Hamm: An older resident of Chester, who was very much involved in the work with Rev. Bernice Warren and Chester Eastside Ministries, and who provided grounding in some of the differences between what the Chester community is now and what it had been when he was a student.

Joan Broadfield: Also an older resident of Chester and Clerk at Chester Friends Meeting. Joan provided perspective as a parent attempting to navigate the challenges in the Chester public school system and she also was able to speak on how she thought education in Chester could be improved through her continued work with the A4PLE project.

Niyonu Spann: Offered her perspective as the Director of the Academy for Peace and Liberation Education.

Mama Ayesha: She was not interviewed for her perspective about the Chester project per se, but was interviewed so that the interns could hear what it took for her to start a school.

Workshops



O: O provided heart-centered work where she explored embodiment practices for moving energy in and out of ourselves, the importance of understanding the importance of the project, and the gifts that each intern brings. The interns were immensely affected by her presentation.

Noah White: Worked with concepts of liberation and conformity, helping interns to discern the differences between the two.

Interviews

During the training portion of the internship, we identified categories of individuals that we would like to reach out to. The following is a list of those categories:

Older Individuals

Parents of Chester Elementary, High School and Alumni

Principals & Current Educators

People Who Run Youth Programs

Business Owners

It was also suggested that we reach out to a diverse array of individuals, ensuring that some of those interviewed were youth who may have negative perceptions of education and that some of those interviewed speak a language other than English and may have an ethnicity other than African American. We asked that each intern interview a minimum of 5 individuals each. In total, 22 interviews were transcribed and summarized. I do not, however, believe that we were able to accomplish a diversity of interviews. Only one person interviewed was not African American and no individuals who run youth programs in Chester were interviewed. While approximately 70% of Chester is African American, with 15.5% of the population being White, and 11.9% being Hispanic, it will be important to have perspectives that reflect this diversity moving forward with the project. Also, a great number of those interviewed were educators at Chester Upland School of the Arts and Chester High School. These perspectives were important in carrying the work forward, however, there is a need to connect with educators in the STEM School and university professors from Widener as well as students who attend all of the schools in Chester. I also believe it will be important to include the perspectives of parents of elementary aged students in the Chester public school system.

We ran into a variety of challenges with the interviews. One of the biggest issues we found was in the defining and understanding of what liberation education looks like in today's world. While our visit to Sankofa Academy greatly aided our understanding, in retrospect it would have been very valuable to begin, rather than end, the internship in this way. Another challenge we found was in communicating the vision of A4PLE to interviewees and explaining the mission of the

school.. Many of the interviewees expressed dismay about a new school in Chester that might decrease the population of the high schools and leach funding from the underfunded public school sector. Interns struggled with many of these challenges and at times, seemed to take on these perspectives themselves. In future work it will be important to directly address these challenges.

While the interview questionnaire, transcripts and summaries are available through the 4cbpeaceschool gmail account, I wanted also include a list of interviewees and their demographics:

Donna West-Islam	Sarah Ferguson	Bruce Jones
Mark Rogers	Ladontay Bel	Tai Amri Spann-Ryan
Rasheedah Lee	Carla Neal	Nijah Goldsborough
Christian Neal	Octavia Naylor	Mama Ayesha
Becky Sterling	Aaron Lewis	Brother Larry Hamm
Anisa Freeman	Dana Hodges	Pamela Danner
Benny Issamadeen	Jermaine Turner	Tynea Harris
Joan Broadfield		

Though we did not collect hard data on those interviewed, rough demographics of interest are as follows:

- **16 women/6 men**
- **21 people of color (African American)**
- **3 high school students**
- **1 college student**
- **3 Chester school employees**
- **3 Entrepreneur/business owners**

Continued Work

I hope that I have provided adequate guidance for continued work on this project. I am very dedicated to this school and am available for query or further consulting work. I have also tried to convey my belief that continued research and communal information sharing would be beneficial. I also believe that the interns should continue to be included in the work of creating A4PLE. While all interns should be considered in ongoing work, I feel that Mekhia, Anisa and Jannah in particular would be very good additions to a team of program developers.

Unfortunately, they each represent very similar demographics, being young African American women, though Jannah has some Dominican heritage even if she cannot speak it. I would suggest then, working with Chester residents who have some experience in the Chester school system and Chester community members who represent the needs of the Black, White and Latinx communities and who hold closely the ideals and vision of liberation education as it pertains to the needs of the city of Chester.