

Alice Tijerina

Jordan: So essentially what has been your involvement with our Hispanic population

Alice: My involvement with the Hispanic population that over the years is I have lived in this community. I have lived here about 35 years I moved here in 1966 I believe and lived out on brookwood. I have been involve dint he community as a Hispanic liaison with state representative John Meek when he was in the legislature and I'm involved also through the schools as a home school consultant. And I work with the migrant program in this district.

Jordan: Can you explain the migrant program

Alice: Well the migrant program is a title C program and we recruit people that work out in the labor fields they do field work they work in the nurseries they work in the agricultural industry and they move from place to place seeking work and when they come to this community seeking work in agriculture then we go out and talk to them and recruit them recruit the students to come to school. And so we are in the schools to help them enroll and get acquainted with the system. Not only do we get the students acquainted with the systems we help the parents get acquainted also.

Jordan: How long has the migrant program been in existence?

Alice: The migrant program has been in existence for many, many, many years. I believe it could be around 40 years that he migrant program has been around.

Jordan: Do you know some of the goals that the Hillsboro school district has taken regarding Hispanic students

Alice: I do know that the goals for the school district is to decrease the drop out rate because I know there is a lot of dropouts in the Hispanic community so I know that is one of the goals. Another goal is to recruit bicultural teachers. Bicultural meaning that there both Hispanic and you speak Spanish and you're of that culture. I know that there trying to recruit a bunch of Hispanic students.

Jordan: How Hispanic are we with working with our Hispanic students

Alice: We, of course we, have been successful we are being successful with working with them. We really try to educate them we try to get them involved with the schools. But we have a long way to go obviously because the students continue to drop out and the parents are not really involved like the Anglo-Saxon parents they are not as involved. It seems to me that we, I think we need to get he parents involved with the schools. I do believe if they were more involved the drop out rate would drop

Jordan: Aside from the drop out rate and student-parent involvement what are some other problems that the district has faced?

Alice: Well it seems to me that the district has had a lot of problems with getting the kids involved with the programs at school obviously because I don't think we have a lot of kids involved with the things like honor society. The more fluent things that the Anglo-Saxon kids the Hispanic kids do not get involved with those it seems that they are segregated...seems like the ESL program is in one section and it seems that the Anglo-Saxon kids are in another section and there really isn't that involvement with the Anglo-kids and the Hispanic kids I feel that there is segregation within the schools there is this institutionalized segregation. It may be that the children themselves segregate themselves. But it is because of the way the program is set up. For example, ESL is a totally segregated program. I believe if ESL was a bi-lingual program where both Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon kids could learn both languages at the same time there would be better communication, better relationships within the schools. The children would get along better. The parents would all get involved. What's wrong with children learning two languages? The Anglo kids learning Spanish. What's wrong with them being in the ESL program with the ESL students. That's what I feel that there is this institutionalized segregation

Jordan: What is your history with those issues?

Alice: What is my history as far as the community is concerned with segregation. Well I have been a strong believer in desegregating the schools and I have followed a lot of the things that have happened in the Hispanic community. As far as Cesar Chavez and the fight for better wages for farm workers and things like that because, not only are the Hispanics segregated in the schools but it's looking like the communities are also being segregated. They are moving into, there are communities being built in Hillsboro that are Hispanic and there are some that are totally white. So, even though segregation is illegal there is segregation anyway. I feel there is a lot of redlining in the communities. There is nothing I can do because of that, what happens is when a Hispanic family starts to move into the neighborhood then another one moves into the neighborhood and pretty soon the Anglo that is living there doesn't want to live there because there are too many Hispanics living there and then they move out and then this community is building up only Hispanics. And then that little community begins to get a reputation for being the rough part of town. We are going to have a lot of problems in the community if that kind of thing continues to happen. But I think if we do not want those things to happen the education has to start in the schools where if we have a bi-lingual; program where we educate both the Hispanic and the Anglo-kids. They grow up together, they learn together they learn to like and love each other in their school they will live together in the community and they will not be a separate neighborhood but live together. But until that happens we will continue to have this kind of segregation.

Jordan: Do you definitely believe in a bi-lingual program?

Alice: I definitely believe in a bilingual program. I want to see a bilingual program in this district. One that would be such an incredible bilingual program that it would really bring a community into unity. Bilingual education. If both sets of parents of the Hispanic community and the Anglo community come together. I think there is this big chance of ac

community living in harmony. And it begins with the schools because this is the only place where there really is that ability to communicate with one another. Because if your out in the community because you don't really want to get involved with anyone out there. But the kids get involved with each other in this school. They play together they eat together they spend the nights together they go to outdoor school together. They live together in a community in harmony. That is the only way to do it. I believe in a strong bilingual program

Jordan: How would you rank the Hillsboro school district's effectiveness of uhm beneficial programs for Hispanics?

Alice: To better educate. In comparison to, I guess other outside Oregon schools. Well, I don't know a whole lot about other schools outside of Oregon I do know that Texas has some good programs, Colorado has some good programs but of course Colorado is, has past that measure. Measure 227 or something like that, this English only. That they want English only. I think Oregon is moving in a good direction. I think that Oregon will one day have some awesome bilingual programs because we are beginning to move. We have started to recruit bilingual and bicultural teachers and umm. Uhh, if we continue this way I think that Oregon can have the best bilingual program in this country

Jordan: I am not too sure about this. But you got a scholarship from OSU?

Alice: Yes, I got a scholarship with OSU. I'm in this BTP program it's called the Bilingual teacher pathway program. And they umm. Are in partnership with the district. That is one of the good things that happening in the district. They are in partnership in the district and they recruit bilingual teachers and I was recruited. I got a scholarship with them and they have paid my education and I am very grateful. I am going to be graduating this summer, and I'm going to be in an internship hopefully with the ESL program. And that is one of the things that this district is really doing trying to educate the bilingual teachers to come in and work with the kids here. And the bilingual teacher pathway program is one of the programs that the district is working with and it's an awesome program.

Jordan: Actually, I think I am out of questions. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you would like to add?

Alice: Well I'd like to see a bilingual program (laughs) in the middle schools and the high schools as soon As possible because we are losing a lot of kids. Not only are we losing Hispanic kids we are losing the Anglo kids too, they need to be empowered. The Anglo kids need to be empowered. And when they have a second language and can feel themselves getting that education. They will also be empowered, just like the Hispanic students; together they can become a wonderful community.