

THEORY OF ACTION



PROBLEM

Disparities and inequities negatively affect the ability to fully thrive

- **Disparity** is a noticeable difference in treatment and outcomes
- **Inequity** is the state of being unfair or unjust

Current educational and economic conditions in Rice County, Minnesota

- Free and reduced-price school lunch qualification: 43%
- Cost burdened renter households: 45%
- High school graduation on-time rate: 79%
- Adults with high school diploma or less: 40.6%

THEORY

Educational & economic opportunity are intertwined and fundamental to achieving health & racial equity

- **Equity** is freedom from bias
- **Health equity** is a fair and just opportunity to attain the highest level of good health
- **Racial equity** is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races
- **Exploratory tool:** RAND Corporation's "How the effects of bias compound"

KEY ACTIONS

- Identify ways to shift conditions for those least advantaged
- Create a shared vision through facilitated partnerships & coalitions
- Collaborate & co-design solutions across levels and sectors
- Incorporate traditionally underrepresented voices into decision-making
- Support services that create relationships, alleviate current needs, and empower youth & their families

IF/THEN

- If we facilitate collaboration and share knowledge across levels and sectors, then we can co-design solutions that can change systems, advance equity, and expand opportunity
- If we recruit and support diverse voices in decision-making, then advocacy in policy arenas is done authentically and across varying perspectives
- If we solicit resources and secure funding, then we can build capacity and support new activities
- If we develop systems, collect data, and track & communicate progress, then we can reinforce accountability and evaluate effectively
- If youth attain higher levels of education, then their potential for economic mobility increases
- If we fiscally invest in the infrastructure of community driven solutions, then we are positioned to create and maintain relationships with community residents that reduce isolation, foster kindergarten readiness, engage parents, widen access to mental health resources, connect neighbors, mentor & guide students, and offer affordable & relevant postsecondary options

VISIONARY COLLECTIVE IMPACT

- Every youth thriving to their fullest potential in Rice County, Minnesota, and beyond
- Total health & racial equity in Rice County, Minnesota, and beyond
- Unlimited educational opportunity & economic mobility in Rice County, Minnesota, and beyond



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PURPOSES

- **Galvanize** collective action for transformational system changes that advance health & racial equity and expand educational & economic opportunity.
 - **Systems Transformation Status** achieved in 2023, the first and only organization in the state of Minnesota to be recognized as such by the national network, StriveTogether.
- **Invest** in complementary strategic programming that is community driven, responsive to current needs, and benefits those who are least advantaged.

PROGRAMS

- Connecting families to resources like high quality and affordable childcare options
- Fostering early childhood development and kindergarten readiness
- Assisting parents in navigating the school system & being engaged with their child's teachers
- Improving home safety & energy efficiency
- Offering free out-of-school time activities
- Elevating academic outcomes
- Mentoring students
- Improving high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates
- Creating purposeful career pathways and supporting local job placements
- Amplifying diverse voices
- Cultivating civic leadership & decision-making opportunities
- Championing healthy habits & lifestyles while nurturing positive social-emotional health

30+

PARTNERS

People-centered:

- Children, youth & their families
- Community residents
- Volunteers
- Individual donors

Founders:

- Northfield Public Schools
- City of Northfield
- Northfield Hospitals and Clinic

Critical Stakeholders:

- Civic leaders (city, county, and state)
- Schools (early education, K-12, higher education)
- Clinics & hospitals
- Social service organizations
- Other nonprofits
- Local business community
- Local foundations & other funders
- Statewide and national cradle to career and collective impact partners

200+

PEOPLE

Children & youth (ages 0-24) and their families who live in rural communities. Most are low income; housed in older mobile homes or rental apartments; and/or people of color, specifically Latine or Somali. Many parents are first generation immigrants who are English Language Learners and their kids are potential first generation college students.

5K+