

God has called Spreading Hope Network to ignite and sustain a movement of educational access in the city. When a group of 40+ broad-based stakeholders gathered in Minneapolis, one couldn't help but *taste* what the Holy Spirit is inspiring in our midst. While we did eat food together, the things to spotlight from the event are the **fellowship** and **message** each of us got to partake in and the **horizons** we pondered together.



Fellowship: Thursday night kicked off with happy hour. To see many friends from various circles around the country getting to know each other was a gift. While we all got acquainted with the “stake” each person holds, the sense that God brought together a rather unique expression of Christ’s body was stirring in our hearts. To gain a sense of who was able to join, see the attendee list at the end of the highlights. We look forward to updating everyone who came as well as those who couldn’t via further updates over the next four months. We’re so grateful for each of your roles in this movement’s community.



Message: Thursday evening built upon itself over dinner via two key elements: a panel that grounded us in national education dynamics as well as a special message from our President that connected our hearts to God’s vision.

In future communication, you’ll have the opportunity to hear more highlights and get access to the full footage. For now, a handful of panel quotations as well as a summary of Russ’s keynote are on the next page.



From the National Perspectives Panel:

“The children need you. It’s time out on waiting for someone else to do it. We are God’s chosen people and if it’s not us, then who?” -Justina Jenkins, GRAACE Director (ACSI)

“People love to say ‘transformation’ in K12 education reform...You guys are actually doing transformational work.” -Ben Lindquist, Executive Partner (Arcadia Education)

“What SHN schools are doing is really inspirational to all other kinds of schools...we’ve got to share these stories.” -Angie Copetillo, COO (Society for Classical Learning)



After Dan Olson did a terrific job drawing out the educational landscape from the panelists as well as Spreading Hope’s place in it, Russ Gregg then addressed the room with a message centered on one key question. He asked us, “Is now a ‘kairos’ (opportune) for spreading hope in God to our nation’s cities?” and proceeded to unpack an intersection of three conditions that inform our “yes.”

Weaving in a compelling story from 1 Samuel about the bold, faith-filled leadership of Jonathan, Russ outlined an **extraordinary need** for hope in our cities, the **extravagant provision** of God for the poor, and the **exceptional opportunity** emerging before our eyes as school choice sweeps the nation. He finished with this concluding note: *“There is a current of God’s love for the urban poor and such an opportunity that He is creating that this is a kairos moment, and we best not miss it. And if you get into the current, you’re in for the ride of your life.”*



There was no better way to further illustrate this charge from Russ than to begin the next day by grounding us in the experience of the leaders on the movement’s frontlines. Their stories of calling & resilient kingdom work were striking & inspirational. Enjoy a handful of quotes on the next page.

School Leader Panelists

Josh Dyson
Hope Academy Wichita
Wichita, KS
25 students (PK-5th)

Sara Kennedy
Imago Dei School
Richmond, VA
134 students (PK-7th)

John Bryant
Harbor Christian Acad.
Houston, TX
134 students (K-9th)

Morgan Shillow
St. Paul’s Comm. School
Oklahoma City, OK
143 students (PK-7th)



Josh: *“Over just 8 months, the Lord gave us favor to launch a new endeavor in our city.”*

Sara: *“To lower barriers, you must have models. That’s why Spreading Hope makes sense.”*

John: *“It’s so nice to have a place like Spreading Hope, where we can come together, with our similar stories and challenges, to encourage each other and strategize together.”*

Morgan: *“I owe so much to Spreading Hope for the success of St. Paul’s.”*



Horizons: At that point, the floor was set for Russ to unveil a *taste* of what we believe is on the horizon for Spreading Hope Network. He didn’t share pre-determined conclusions for stakeholders to align with, rather Russ outlined early stage thinking and hypotheses for an emerging new vision. Here are several elements we’re ruminating on:

- Shifting from maximizing the number of schools launched to maximizing the quantity and quality of lives changed.
- Shifting from a loose affiliation network model toward discerning our place on a continuum between “school management” and “school development.”
- Taking on a “servant” DNA: ensuring that all schools that are a part of SHN feel that “headquarters” exists to serve them.
- Cross-pollination of strengths: believing that the solutions to our problems are “in the room,” and committing to learning from one another’s assets.
- Sharing a common operating & management system that helps network schools live out “principles of greatness.”
- Living more fully into our role of convening and connecting the “urban” tribe of the classical, Christian education movement.
- Fostering a movement guided by limited core principles to pursue collective fidelity toward with collaboration, accountability, and benchmarking.

We’re immensely grateful for the stakeholder input on these elements and other key questions at the summit. Please join us in praying over all these items as well as the additional reflections that will emerge throughout our business planning process with Arcadia Education. We’ll offer opportunities for your further input over the next four months.



Summit Participants

The list below of 45 individuals are those who participated in this national stakeholder summit. If there is an asterisk, that means they participated virtually. Many others were sad to miss the event and we hope these highlights serve to keep those who missed in the loop. We look forward to further engagement with all the stakeholders that God has and will provide to Spreading Hope Network.

Russ Gregg
Jeff Bird
Garth Warren
Karen Brown
Justina Jenkins
Jennifer Thompson
Matt Metcalf
Denny Vauters
Ben Lindquist
Otto Monroy
Matt Burton
Paul Guidera
Cecil Smith
Ben Goessling
John Swanson*

Dan Olson
Michael Bolland
Mike Brocker
David Sexauer
Angie Copetillo
Sara Kennedy
John LaFontsee
Morgan Shillow
Patrick Creedon
Ciara Darr
Ty Rallens
Phyllis Gregg
Gwen Smith
Kfer Johnson
Tom Boardman*

Brad Pieper*
Debbie Harris
Heidi Neumiller
Jill Hartness
Ken Schuetz
Joshua Dyson
Brooke Vidlund
Chauncey Shillow
John Bryant
Steve Blom
Nathan Ziegler
Doug Smith
Jim Stigman
Jonathon Basurto*
Susie Boardman*

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