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Source: Hartford Public Library, Hartford Times collection, 1968, via Hartford Studies Project website
Background:

- Originally conceived as two-way, but became voluntary city-to-suburb only
- Administered by Hartford Board of Education until 1998; similar program restarted by CREC in 1999
RESEARCH QUESTION: Which towns participated (or declined to participate) in Project Concern, what was the extent of their involvement, and what factors motivated their decisions?
Why does the research matter?

• voluntary desegregation has potential, but programs like this have not always succeeded - why?

• 2003 Sheff settlement calls for major increase in city-suburb voluntary busing
Total Project Concern Student Enrollment SYE 1967-1999

Source: Project Concern reports
Categories of Towns

➢ EARLY PARTICIPANTS
   Farmington, South Windsor, Simsbury and West Hartford

➢ LATE PARTICIPANTS
   Glastonbury and Avon

➢ NON-PARTICIPANTS
   Bloomfield and East Windsor
Types of Source Material

- **Numerical Data**
  - Project Concern enrollments, Census data

- **Newspaper Coverage**
  - Hartford Courant, Hartford Times, etc.

- **Reports**
  - “Schools for Hartford” (Harvard report), etc.
Four Factors:

- 1) Racial Composition
- 2) Financial Pressure
- 3) Racial Language
- 4) Community Leadership
1) Racial Composition

• Some towns lacking racial diversity
  • Bloomfield almost 14%
  • West Hartford less than 1%
2) Financial Pressures

• Funds used to help schools

• When funding decreases so does participation

• Some towns help when funding threatens to end PC
3) Racial Language

- Race played a role in many concerns expressed by residents
- Simsbury noted as not having problems with racial aspect of PC
- Farmington and West Hartford were reported as having heated debates dealing with race
4) Community Leadership

- Many town leaders took neutral position publicly

- Glastonbury residents took on leadership position by making their position heard

- West Hartford Board chairman publicly in favor of PC
Conclusion:

- Different factors affected towns to various degrees
- Factors shift in the thirty-three years of operation

All suburbs did not respond the same simply because they are suburbs