



**A Call to Action:  
Important Conclusions from the “Education of  
Black Male Youth Lecture and Workshop Series.”**

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# WHEELOCK COLLEGE

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As we conclude this series, I would like to thank our presenters and our 2,100-plus audience of parents, community members, youth, school leaders, district leaders, educators, researchers, funders, and METCO directors, all of whom contributed to the success of the Education of Black Male Youth Series. Your energy, your support, and your commitment are what sustain us and compel us to change and grow as we think about the ways we educate, challenge and prepare young black men for meaningful and successful lives.

Since being named president of Wheelock College in 2004, I have been continually impressed by the devotion and commitment our students and faculty show to our mission of improving the lives of children and families.

Special thanks to the following colleagues for their work in designing and sustaining the series:

- Ceronne B. Daly, Wheelock College Education of Black Male Youth Series Coordinator and Director, Pre-Collegiate and College Access Programs—Wheelock College
- Dr. Adrian K. Haugabrook, Founding Director of the Aspire Institute, Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Success, Chief Diversity Officer—Wheelock College
- Ron Walker, Executive Director of the Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color (COSEBOC)

I would like to extend a special thank-you to the entire Wheelock community for their support and commitment to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Jackie Jenkins-Scott  
President



## A Call to Action: Important Conclusions from the “Education of Black Male Youth Lecture and Workshop Series.”

- **We must believe in high expectations for our young black males.** Educators, parents and other supporters must approach the learning, growth and development of our young men from an asset-based approach; not a deficit-model. We should work to make academic excellence (i.e., academic achievement, advanced placement, gifted and talented), leadership and engagement an important part of the formula for success.
- **Students must take an active and positive role in their own education and development.** This requires a breakaway from the mindset described in Gloria Ladson-Billings’ lecture, where students and teachers alike have low expectations: “I’ll show up and won’t disrupt your class and you don’t expect any work or deliverables from me.” A positive school culture that promotes self-esteem and high achievement can go a long way towards changing such attitudes in students.
- **Students must be prepared for college and career success; not just high school graduation and college access.**
- **Parents/guardians and members of the community must play an active role in the education of young black men.** Parents can play a pivotal role in the lives of their children. As the Family Handbook from Boston Renaissance Charter School states, “We believe that parent involvement is everything you do to support your child’s education. This participation includes what you do at home to foster good study habits and love of learning and, when possible, your active involvement at school.”
- **Educators need an understanding and appreciation of their students’ background and must believe in the ability of their students to succeed.** Included in this is a change in how students are disciplined and referred to special education and gifted learning programs.
- **Schools must make use of lessons that meet the learning needs and styles of young black males.** They must create flexible and adaptive curricula that prepares them to become innovative and proficient learners who can combine the skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, and team-building along with experiences that foster flexibility, creativity, adaptability, resilience and opportunities to learn-by-doing.
- **Research, assessment and evaluation must continue to discern effective methods to enhance learning, growth and development.** We need to continue to build upon the existing body of knowledge. We need to better understand the correlation between learning growth and development of young males of color with such areas as psychosocial development, youth culture, environmental influences, new media, pedagogy and curricular innovations, school leadership, school structure and the role of higher education.
- **Policy needs to be an integral element in ensuring success.** Social policy and school district policies need to be examined and developed that promote excellence and educational quality. We need policies that support effective discipline; that help with early identification and early intervention strategies; that supports the scale and replication of effective schools; and policies that support schools and school districts (public, private, charter and pilots) efforts to focus on young males of color.

## Introduction

“Black males face an inordinate number of problems and hardships. These challenges set them apart from the rest of the U.S. population and deserve attention,” said Wheelock College President Jackie Jenkins-Scott at the launch of the “Education of Black Male Youth Lecture and Workshop Series.”

Sponsored by Wheelock College, the Delores Walker Johnson Center for Thoughtful Leadership at ATLAS Learning Communities, and the Aspire Institute at Wheelock College, the three year lecture series was designed to inform and engage practitioners, academics, and community members about the challenges of educating black male youths.

“This student group continues to perplex educators with statistics that place them at the lowest rung of the academic ladder. This fact is of great significance as our nation's diversity grows and globalization becomes the new reality,” said Ron Walker, director of the Delores Walker Johnson Center for Thoughtful Leadership.

According to a recent report from the Schott Foundation, the graduation rate for black male students was 47 percent.. Additionally, while black males represent less than 9 percent of students, they account for 24 percent of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions, nearly 20 percent of students classified as mentally retarded, and less than 4 percent of those identified as gifted/ talented.

<b>U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights</b>				
<b><i>Projected Values for the Nation: 2004</i></b>				
	<b>Black (non-Hispanic)</b>		<b>White (non-Hispanic)</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Membership</b>	4,128,695	8.58	14,502,371	30.13
<b>Suspension-Out of School</b>	784,917	23.93	988,669	30.14
<b>Total Expulsion</b>	25,940	24.42	33,668	31.70
<b>Mental Retardation</b>	127,513	19.68	197,775	30.53
<b>Gifted and Talented</b>	124,573	3.89	1,103,694	34.46
<b>AP Mathematics</b>	11,311	2.66	153,601	36.16
<b>AP Science</b>	11,927	2.82	141,429	33.47

From 2006 to 2009, the series brought 23 nationally recognized experts to Wheelock’s campus to address these and other challenges connected to the education of black boys. The presenters explored the root causes of these challenges and offered innovative solutions to address them. This document is meant to extend the reach of these sessions beyond the 2,100-plus audience of parents, community members, youth, school leaders, district leaders, educators, researchers, funders, and METCO directors who had the opportunity to attend them.

A listing of each year’s theme, presenters, and session titles is available on pages 13 to 15.

## Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Black Boys

Any attempt to educate black male students must begin by recognizing that they have unique educational and emotional needs that many schools are not yet prepared to meet. As lecturer Howard Stevenson wrote, “In order to protect the future of African American boys, we must first appreciate the anger that underlies many of their life decisions and track this anger to its roots.”

A consequence of educators not understanding the needs and learning styles of black boys is the large number of special education referrals this population receives. Gwendolyn Webb Johnson discussed this matter in her lecture, “Leadership Perspectives in Confronting the Disproportionate Representation of Black Males in Special Education,” as well as a *Qualitative Studies in Education* journal article. In reference to the behavior of black boys, she writes: “Their home and community environments affirm and encourage movement, exploration, inquiry, and sometimes challenge.... Teachers and other service providers unfamiliar with the activity levels of African-American youth often misinterpret such behavior as problematic. They lack knowledge and understanding in how to access the strengths of these youth.” Webb Johnson advocates for research and treatment models that impact the educational, ecological, and personal environmental frameworks in which black boys interact.

Black boys are also disproportionately suspended and expelled from school. In her lecture, “Boyz to Men: Teaching to Restore Black Boy’s Childhood,” Gloria Ladson-Billings discusses how many schools see teaching black and Latino boys as their biggest challenge, and that the primary focus of these children’s educational experience is maintaining order and discipline.

“The way in which we treat young black boys is to label them, push them out of the system, write them off and then adjudicate them quite early as we would adults. In this sense, young black boys are not given the opportunity to be young black boys, but are treated instead as invisible or as a stereotype of violent, misbehaving black men.”

This overuse of suspensions and expulsions to deal with classroom behavior issues encourages a “disciplinary discrepancy.” Ladson-Billings further argues that discipline directed towards black boys is reactionary and exhibits itself in the form of control measures rather than building up any self actualization or self management skills. Education becomes “feminized” regarding the norms and routines at school: silence, stillness, respect without reciprocity, responsibility without freedom, and compliance without cognitive engagement.

Ladson-Billings offered several solutions to improving the educational experience of black boys, starting with students, teachers, and parents changing their own attitudes and perceptions. Tying individual student success to class success, will help instill in kids it is their responsibility to help one another. She also advocated for cultivating a caring community where “all teachers prepare themselves to serve all students”—regardless of gender and ethnicity. However, special effort must be made to “sponsor” black males who want to teach. In addition, special education decisions should be based on facts and made from the central office, not from within schools. While social workers and counselors must disentangle kids from their problems and give them a clean slate while encouraging them to be who they are.

However, being who they are is difficult for black boys due to the racist environment in which they live. In his lecture, “Playing with Anger: Engaging the Emotional Lives of Black Boys in Schools,” Howard Stevenson touches upon the “Catch-33” faced by black boys: “if you apply effort at avoiding the world’s images and stereotypes, you’re damned. If you decide to ‘damn the torpedoes’

and use the stereotypes to scare the world into respecting you, you're damned. So your only recourse is to change the rules of the game, or stop playing the image game altogether."

Stevenson argues that because of this Catch-33 black boys (and people in general) "must be aware of the societal constrictions in which they operate, but also aware of each individual's identity, talent, and potential. Unfortunately, black boys live in a systemic environment that is deeply racist; as a result once they become aware of how this systemic 'matrix' intersects with their lives, they face the challenge of 'rejecting definitions of yourself within paradigms that seek your self-destruction.'"

Rejecting these definitions requires personal empowerment to combat stereotype as well as supportive school/out-of-school structures that bring cultural pride, relevant connections, and physical engagement to a disenfranchised population of students. However, this is often not the type of intervention used to reach young black boys. "One of the most challenging issues in this work is how few people respond to *boys* as if they're *boys*; they respond to them as men, and as a consequence prescribe mainly "control" interventions that inhibit the naturally conflicted development of youth."

To help teachers change their perceptions of their students, lecturer Benjamin Wright offers ideas in his session on de-traumatizing black boys. "If you drop a baby, it may be brain damaged. I think what has happened in society is that we have dropped black boys, not on their heads, but inside their heads." Wright believes that black boys have been traumatized by their situation and that both students and teachers have bought into the myths about black boys, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Dealing with this trauma requires teachers to address the trauma in their own lives. "How traumatized are you? Have you really examined you? What kind of expectations do you have? Do you have high expectations for yourself? Do you have high expectations for your students, or do you think they are all thugs?" Additionally, not addressing this trauma is part of the reason why black teachers are not always best for black students because they too have been traumatized by society's myths about blacks and have "baggage."

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***Howard Stevenson has developed a program to meet the emotional needs of black boys.***

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See Page 6.

The notion of educators modifying perceptions of their students was also raised during the panel discussion, "To Be Male, in School, and Black." Panelist Lilia Bartolomé stated that "most teachers are trained in methodology and curriculum ('teacher-proofing'), but inadequate attention goes toward the ramification of individual beliefs on student outcomes, and more importantly towards the structural ideologies that our teachers carry and implicitly express every day of their practice." She identified three areas in which beliefs were particularly damaging to students—social meritocracy, assimilationist thinking, and deficit orientation—that together "rationalize disrespect for subordinated students' primary cultures and languages, mis-teach them, and then blame them for their academic difficulties." Rather than confront these inherent and difficult truths, an assimilationist approach is forced on non-white minorities, where social benefits are extended slowly, grudgingly, and ultimately to subordinate and socialize minority groups for second-class citizenship.

Backing up Bartolomé's assertions, was a qualitative study on teachers' attitudes conducted by fellow session participant, Felicity Crawford. This study of white teachers in urban

Massachusetts schools revealed a number of troubling issues for the education of students of color. She found that deficit and classist ideology on the part of white special education teachers, many of whom have taught for over 25 years and consider themselves colorblind, view their minority students as un-teachable due to life factors outside of school that overwhelm any classroom inputs.

In the same session, Paula Elliott spoke about “mapping the terrain” for teacher training. She posed rhetorical questions asking “how prepared are teachers to critique previous assumptions of meritocracy, deficit thinking, assimilationalist ideals, and racist/classist ideologies?” In her opinion, it is important for teachers to look within their own stories to find values, knowledge, and experiences that influence their ability to teach effectively and democratically. Elliott shared several sample questions, or “inquiry guideposts” for teacher training around the areas of personal beliefs, relationships, and passions.

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***It is important that teachers understand the significance of students’ cultural identities and lives.***

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Stephanie Cox Suarez discussed her experience in training effective teachers—a process she termed “sharing the wealth.” She explains that “there are clear roles and expectations set by the culture of power and that her role as a trainer included acting as a ‘cultural mentor’ and ‘gatekeeper,’ as well as providing the academic and professional ‘code’ for what it takes to excel in the workforce. Prominent among this is the importance of high

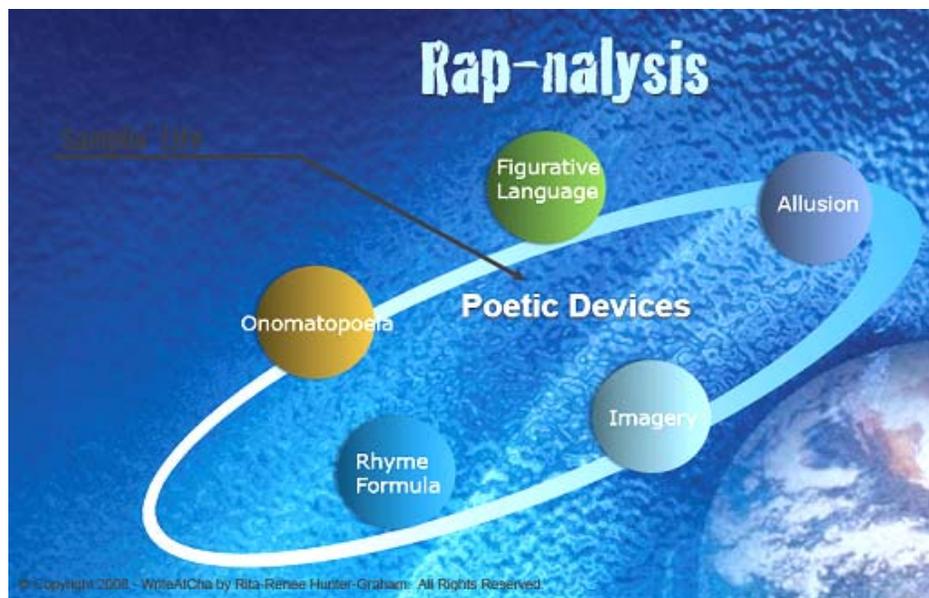
quality written English.” Throughout teacher training, it is critical to maintain the habit of praxis, and constantly reflect on the assumptions and actions that a teacher makes.

Nelda Barrón added to Suarez’s comments on teacher development. She has found that many of her teacher trainees operate from an ideological framework that reflects dominant, often harmful mainstream belief systems. “Teachers are products of their own socialization experiences, but implicitly impose their socialization onto students whether or not they share the same experiences.” Therefore, it is important that teachers understand the significance of students’ cultural identities and lives; become culturally competent through development of consciousness of how their own socialization affects their perspectives, signals, and actions; stop dichotomized thinking about students as “others” whose cultures are inherently opposed; and become the cultural others in order to develop socio-cultural consciousness of other worldviews.

## Innovative Curriculum

A common theme that emerged in many sessions was the need to have a curriculum that was culturally relevant to students' lives and experiences. As lecturer Alfred Tatum wrote in *Educational Leadership* magazine: "Neither effective reading strategies nor comprehensive literacy reform efforts will close the achievement gap in a race- and class-based society unless meaningful texts are at the core of the curriculum."

Such texts take many different forms, as demonstrated by Rita-Renée Hunter-Graham's lecture, "Using Positive Hip Hop to Teach Poetry and Storytelling." The popularity and familiarity of hip hop to black students make the genre an ideal vehicle to use in the classroom. The lecture presented a lesson plan that uses song lyrics to teach students about poetic devices such as alliteration and metaphor. Students also analyze the meaning of song lyrics and write poetry of their own.



A slide from Hunter-Graham's lecture on using hip hop

"New media enables new literacy," said Jabari Mahiri as part of his lecture on the overrepresentation of black students in the school discipline system. He argued that black male youth have a culture and language different from that found in mainstream school settings, resulting in these students entering school at a disadvantage and quickly becoming disengaged and involved in school disciplinary action. Mahiri offered examples of how cutting-edge technology and interactive activities speak to youth and can be used to engage them in learning. For instance, students develop math, design, and engineering skills by creating video documentaries and playing video games like *The Sims*. Mahiri also stresses the importance of giving students the opportunity to collaborate and teach each other, which builds their self-management skills.

Tatum's own lecture, "Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males," discusses how students' disengagement contributes to them being placed (often times incorrectly) in special education and dropping out. Tatum believes culturally relevant curriculum can help mitigate the low academic achievement of black male students and offers guidance on what the texts in this curriculum should look like: "they are intellectually exciting for both students and teachers, they serve as a roadmap

and provide apprenticeship, they challenge students cognitively, and they help students apply literacy skills and strategies independently.” Professional development for educators to teach these texts and consultation with students about the value of the texts is also important.

“A lack of understanding of the environmental influences which shape the thinking and behavior of African-American male children and the absence of strategies to counter these influences have widened the achievement gap,” writes lecturer Rory Edwards on his website. One tool to address this gap is Edward’s own program, “Once a Man, Twice a Child.”

The program’s name reflects the life cycle initiating with childhood, progressing to manhood, and ending with childhood again. It incorporates “Rites of Passage” lessons that assist young, minority males in successfully transitioning from the initial childhood phase to the secondary phase of manhood. Its mission is to create a safe, supportive environment that promotes the principles of consistent academic excellence as well as self-empowerment..

“Providing a thorough understanding of the participant’s culture is central to the teachings of ‘Once a Man, Twice a Child’ and is critical to the understanding of his own history and the importance of the African, African-American and Latino Diaspora,” states Edwards. “‘Once a Man, Twice a Child’ recognizes the importance of visual cultural exposure, practical hands-on team building activities, discussion groups, and positive parental participation activities.”

The curriculum of “Once a Man, Twice a Child” is centered on the work of Jawanza Kunjufu, an

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expert on the development of minority males, and William Jenkins, a nationally renowned educator and author. In addition to their concepts, other strategies and methodologies are used to teach the social understanding of environmental influences on behavior, healthy choices, expression of emotion, etiquette, respect, leadership, nutrition, hygiene, and community service. Spiritual development is enhanced by instructing participants on the importance of prayer and meditation.

Howard Stevenson directs a program that addresses the emotional needs of black boys. The intervention is set to promote the development of safe and reliable relationships between youth and three key role model groups (i.e., peers, undergraduate students, and older adult volunteers) who

want to spend time improving young people’s lives. Called Preventing Long-Term Anger and Aggression in Youth or PLAAY, the multi-component program seeks to reduce the anger and aggression of black urban youth with a history of interpersonal conflict. The program is composed of the following elements:

- TEAM (Teaching Empowerment through Athletic Movement) where basketball is a “game of identity expression.” Special emphasis is placed on moments of aggression where masculinity / ego identity are played out, and practitioners encourage students to defuse or channel their frustration while “in the moment.”
- CPR (Cultural Pride Reinforcement) is an “anti-violence cultural socialization program.” Students learn to be critically conscious of their identity and actions, and to channel their strong feelings in a culturally relevant “Black barbershop” atmosphere. They learn how to be angry, bring their passions to an argument, but to control those passions.

- MAAR (Martial Arts Anger Reduction) is similar to the basketball program in channeling aggression, but has less trash talking and focuses more on internal and external balance and awareness.
- COPE (Community Outreach through Parent Engagement)
- ROPE (Rites of Passage Empowerment)

Stevenson focused on two themes that run through the PLAAY program—*movement* and “in the moment” *emotion*—both are especially emphasized in basketball and martial arts programming. Movement, particularly for boys, is a way to deal with stress, a way of coping, of dealing with anger. It expresses personal style, identity, and history—often in deeper ways than speech can easily convey. Instructors, or “helpers,” in the PLAAY program consistently emphasize kinesthetic awareness, including physical contact with students as a statement of support and presence. Sometimes instructors set up physical confrontations, such as intentional fouls in basketballs, to challenge students to respond appropriately.

By doing things in the moment, instructors learn a particular student’s triggers, what gets a rise, and how to target him as an individual before he goes off. Most kids don’t want to fight, but once emotion kicks in they feel obligated. If an instructor sees a student begin to stutter, move—whatever other “warning signals” he commonly displays—they can intervene to push him out of that framework, and also provide an excuse for a student who doesn’t want to look like he’s backing down.

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By learning the triggers of individual students, instructors prevent aggressive incidents, but also demonstrate to students that they know them well and care enough about them to learn their specific behavior patterns. Over time, students become aware of their “triggers” along with adults, and are better able to de-escalate from a threatening situation. While black boys may be “hypervulnerable in a hypermasculine world,” personal and cultural empowerment can mediate their response to stress and increase their tolerance of frustration.

## School Programs and Community Partnerships

While most public schools have been unwilling or unable to implement the culturally relevant curriculum many experts feel is necessary to reach black male students, a number of charter schools have stepped up to fill the educational void. One such school is the Eagle Academy for Young Men, whose president, David Banks, spoke during the 2006 lecture series.

Founded by One Hundred Black Men, Inc., the first Eagle Academy public high school opened in the fall of 2004 in the Bronx. At that time, the Eagle Academy was the first all male public high school to open in New York City in 30 years. Four hundred male students, grades 9-12, are currently enrolled in the Bronx school. The first class of seniors graduated in 2008.

Included in the school's mission is a commitment to "develop citizens of integrity who will become lifelong leaders." The school believes that this can be best accomplished by exposing the students to individuals that exhibit these characteristics.

As a result, every student is paired with an adult mentor. The goal of this mentoring program is to develop well-structured and long term relationships between the students and adult males. Research suggests that having sustained ties with a stable adult male is imperative for the academic and personal success of young men. Eagle mentors represent high levels of success in a variety of professions including law, financial services, medicine, criminal justice, and entrepreneurship.

"Part of our model at One Hundred Black Men is 'Boys will be what they see,' and it's hard for kids to dream about things they've never seen," said Banks in a *New York Times* interview.

Eagle students also observe a uniform dress code. The school's Extended Day, Saturday Institute, and Summer Bridge programs provide all Eagle students with additional learning opportunities outside of traditional classroom hours. Focusing on the "whole child," the extended day and the extended week allow for varied leadership training, cultural development, and intergenerational exchanges with the male mentors who volunteer to buddy one-on-one with each young man.

In addition to a rigorous academic program, Eagle students in the Bronx are engaged in many extracurricular activities including robotics, debate, martial arts, and community service. Students are required to take part in community service, the rationale for which is provided by the Eagle Academy website:

"We believe that it is crucial for our Eagle Academy students to develop a deep-rooted sense of responsibility and commitment to the communities around them. The goal is to empower our youth through intensive community service and to reinforce the message that they are an integral part of their world community. Through community service, students discover that they have the power to make a difference in the world."

Another charter school seeking to improve the education of young black boys is Urban Prep Academies in Chicago. The school's founder and CEO, Tim King, discussed his school and how the model it uses can be replicated in other communities.

Urban Prep is the nation's first public charter high school for boys and the first and only all boys public school in the state of Illinois. The school's mission is to provide a comprehensive, high-quality college preparatory education to young men that results in graduates succeeding in college. Urban Prep has two Chicago-area campuses, with a third scheduled to open in 2010.

The schools are responding to the needs of communities that have high poverty and

unemployment challenges, large African-American populations, low male student achievement in high schools, and almost no new schools.

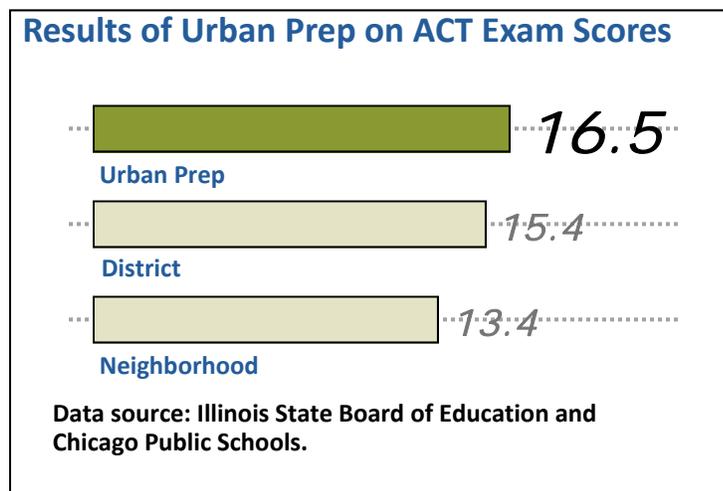
“There is a huge need to figure out how to provide these young men with the opportunities they need to succeed in life,” King said in a *Chicago Magazine* interview, “and not to have them end up in jail, not end up in the criminal justice system, not end up killing each other, not end up dropping out.”

The all boy structure of the school is meant to remove the distraction of the opposite sex-and the behaviors boys engage in to attract the attention of girls. Additionally, the single sex setup eases pressure on boys to conform to typically masculine gender roles, making it easier to participate in activities such as choir and other “feminine” endeavors.

Urban Prep’s approach is to provide its students with a comprehensive educational experience by encircling them within four connecting arcs: academic (rigorous college-prep curriculum), service (volunteer activities), activity (school-sponsored teams and clubs), and professional (workplace setting to gain business knowledge and experience).

Additionally, the school offers each student the use of a laptop throughout the year, and each student meets in a small teacher-led peer group on a daily basis.

In 2008, Urban Prep had 296 students and outperformed other schools in the neighborhood and the district as a whole in terms of daily attendance, participation in extracurricular activities, freshmen on track to graduate, and on the ACT Exam.



Improving the education of black male students is not limited to the classroom, parents and community members also have a role to play. As lecturer David Miller of the Urban Leadership Institute previously stated: “Whether we examine the escalating drop out rates, suspension and expulsion rates or the inability of urban school districts to recruit and retain certified teachers, it is clear that many ‘adults’ have completely taken their, ‘eyes off the prize’... At the end of the day under funded schools with strong management, compassionate teachers and a hand full of parents with a vision for the future can dramatically improve the likelihood that children receive a quality education.”

Miller and his Urban Leadership Institute Colleague LaMarr Darnell Shields devoted their lecture

to presenting strategies to improve relationships among parents as well as increasing community based support for programs and services targeted toward black male students. In the opinion of Miller and Shields, parents and community leaders rarely have opportunities where they can speak

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openly with teachers and rarely do teachers have opportunities to openly talk with community leaders. This lack of connection between home and school plays a role in black male students being disproportionately suspended and expelled.

Curt Green of the Business, Engineering, Science, and Technology (BEST) Academy in Atlanta described the partnerships between his school and local organizations—The 100 Black Men of Atlanta Inc, the Boy Scouts of America, and the Atlanta Area Council—during his lecture entitled “Community Partnerships that Work within a Single Gender Environment.” Green began his talk by defining what he meant by

partnerships: “collaboration between area businesses, organizations, and other stakeholders that work together to achieve the school mission and support student achievement.”

While every partnership differs, Green believes there are a number of common objectives:

- Support **student achievement**
- Provide schools with vital **resources**
- Align realistic goals with **school needs** and private resources
- Share school’s passion for **achieving common goals**
- Involve and engage **all staff**
- Serve for at least **one school year**
- Champion the good work schools do **in the community**

For instance, 100 Black Men committed to assist BEST in a variety of ways including: financial resources, serving as mentors, organizing and supporting academic field trips/classroom initiatives, providing transportation, as well as rewards and incentives for attendance, academics, and behavior.

Green also discussed partnership agreements such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). “An MOU is a moral not a legal obligation,” explained Green. “However, MOUs focus on establishing and defining relationships and building up a level of trust and goodwill between the parties.”

## Conclusion

While the “Education of Black Male Youth Lecture and Workshop Series” did not provide all the answers to one of America’s biggest educational challenges, it gave educators, practitioners, community members, policymakers, parents, and students themselves, new guidance and tools. Nearly all the presentations touched on the fact that schools do not understand how black boys learn and that schools must find new ways to engage this population. By properly engaging black boys, schools will increase students’ academic success, while reducing the number of disciplinary issues and special education referrals. Engaging students requires teachers to have high expectations for their students, tools and curricula compatible with students’ learning needs and styles, as well as support from administrators, parents, community members, and of course students themselves.

**Year One: 2006 to 2007**  
**Responding to the Crisis Confronting Black Male Youth**

Date	Topic	Presenter and Affiliation
October 18, 2006	<i>The Education of Black Male Youth: What Steps Can School Leaders Take to Ensure the Success of Their Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ronald Walker</b>, Director and Founder of the Delores Walker Johnson Center for Thoughtful Leadership</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Roger Harris</b>, Headmaster, Boston Renaissance Charter School - Boston Massachusetts</li> </ul>
October 23, 2006	<i>Providing the Building Blocks of Success for Tomorrow's Visionary Leaders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>David Banks</b>, Founding Principal at Eagle Academy for Young Men - New</li> </ul>
November 15, 2006	<i>Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching and Preparing Our Black Male Youth for the Twenty-First Century</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Margaret Beale Spencer</b>, Professor of Education and Psychology, University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education</li> </ul>
December 11, 2006	<i>Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Alfred Tatum</b>, Department of Literacy, Northern Illinois University</li> </ul>
January 10, 2007	<i>Leadership Perspectives in Confronting the Disproportionate Representation of Black Males in Special Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Gwendolyn Webb Johnson</b>, College of Education, Texas A &amp; M University</li> </ul>

**Year Two: 2007 to 2008**  
**Appreciating the Social, Emotional**  
**and Learning Lives of Black Male Students**

Date	Topic	Presenter and Affiliation
October 30, 2007	<i>Yes We Can, If We Choose: De-Traumatizing Black Boys</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Benjamin Wright,</b> Single-Sex School Activist and Chief Administrative Officer, Metro Nashville Public Schools</li> </ul>
November 13, 2007	<i>Boyz to Men? Teaching to Restore Black Boys' Childhood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings,</b> Professor Kellner Family Chair in Urban Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison Past President, AERA</li> </ul>
December 10, 2007	<i>Playing with Anger: Engaging the Emotional Lives of Black Boys in Schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Howard Stevenson,</b> Associate Professor and Director of the Professional Counseling and Psychology Program, Applied Psy- chology and Human Development Division, University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of</li> </ul>
January 16, 2008	<i>Why Black Males are So Over-Represented in School Discipline Systems and How This</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Jabari Mahiri,</b> Associate Professor of Language and Literacy, Society and Culture, University of California Berkeley, Graduate School of Education</li> </ul>
March 13, 2008	<i>To Be Male, In School and Black: Connections and Consequences of Teacher Beliefs and Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nelda L. Barrón,</b> Assistant Professor in Elementary Education, Wheelock College</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Lilia I. Bartolomé,</b> Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Linguistics, UMASS Boston.</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Stephanie Cox Suarez,</b> Assistant Professor in Special Education, Wheelock College</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Felicity Crawford,</b> Assistant Professor in Special Education, Wheelock College</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Paula Elliott,</b> Educational Consultant</li> </ul>

**Year Three: 2008 to 2009**  
**Promising Practices: Advancing the Academic,  
 Social, and Emotional Development of Black Male Youth**

Date	Topic	Presenter and Affiliation
November 5, 2008	<i>Touching Books, Changing Lives: Creating, Sustaining, and Replicating Successful Schools for African-American Boys</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tim King</b>, Esq., Founder, President, and CEO of Urban Prep Academies—Chicago, Illinois</li> <li>• <b>Tre Childress</b>, MA, M.Ed., Teacher, Urban Prep Academies, Principal designate for Urban Prep Academy for Young Men—East Garfield Park</li> <li>• <b>Dennis Lacewell</b>, M.Ed., Vice President of Academic Programs (Co-Principal), Urban Prep Academy for Young Men—</li> </ul>
December 10, 2008	<i>Community Partnerships that Work within a Single Gender Environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Curt Green</b>, M.Ed., MPA The Business Engineering, Science and Technology Academy (B.E.S.T.) - Atlanta Georgia</li> </ul>
	<i>Using Positive Hip Hop to Teach Poetry and Storytelling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Rita-Renée Hunter-Graham</b>, The Business Engineering, Science and Technology Academy (B.E.S.T.) - Atlanta Georgia</li> </ul>
February 4, 2009	<i>Keep Our Eyes on the Prize: Engaging Parents and Community Leaders around Improving Academic and Social Indicators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>David Miller</b>, M.Ed., Co-Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, Urban Leadership Institute</li> <li>• <b>LaMarr Darnell Shields</b>, M.Ed., Co-Founder and President, Urban Leadership Institute</li> </ul>
March 4, 2009	<i>Once a Man, Twice a Child</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rory Edwards</b>, M.Ed. President , Edwards Educational Consulting, LLC</li> </ul>

**Wheelock College's commitment to creating a community forum designed to inform and engage our community in dialogue as we explore our individual and collective role in the Education of Black Male Youth was a national effort.**

During our *three* years of hosting these community dialogues, we have convened *fourteen* compelling dialogues *free* to the community.

Our overarching theme is the Education of Black Male Youth however, every year we identified a specific topic in which to focus our year's dialogues

- Year One: *Responding to the Crisis Confronting Black Male Youth*
- Year Two: *Appreciating the Social, Emotional and Learning Lives of Black Male Students*
- Year Three: *Promising Practices: Advancing the Academic, Social, and Emotional Development of Black Male Youth*

In order to inform our collective thinking and action we invited *twenty-three* presenters representing *fourteen* institutions across the nation:

- Boston Renaissance Charter School – Boston, Massachusetts
- Business Engineering, Science and Technology Academy (B.E.S.T.) – Atlanta Georgia
- Delores Walker Johnson Center for Thoughtful Leadership – Boston, Massachusetts
- Eagle Academy for Young Men – Bronx, New York
- Metro Nashville Public Schools – Nashville, Tennessee
- Northern Illinois University – Dekalb, Illinois
- University of California-Berkeley – Berkeley, California
- University of Massachusetts Boston – Boston, Massachusetts
- University of Pennsylvania, – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- University of Wisconsin-Madison – Madison, Wisconsin
- Urban Leadership Institute – Baltimore, Maryland
- Urban Prep Academy for Young Men – Chicago, Illinois
- Texas A & M University – College Station, Texas
- Wheelock College – Boston, Massachusetts

Finally over *2,100* individuals joined us on this very important learning journey.

We would like to thank our presenters and their institutions and our audience, their communities and institutions for their thoughtful and honest participation in our gatherings.

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Wheelock College, founded in 1888 and located in Boston, Mass., is a private institution with the public mission—to improve the lives of children and families. The College fulfills this mission by providing a strong education in the arts and sciences and in its professional fields—education, child and family studies, and social work—for which its undergraduate and graduate programs are nationally and internationally recognized.

