

Two-Day Conference

Addressing the Achievement of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Students

March 30, 2007 ~ 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

and/or

March 31, 2007 ~ 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Closing Connecticut's



Achievement Gaps

Location:

Four Points by Sheraton
Meriden, CT

Co-Sponsored By:

Connecticut State Department of Education
State Education Resource Center
State of Connecticut African American Affairs Commission



The unfortunate divisive history of our country with regard to race contributes to our inability to sustain the necessary dialogue to adequately address this problem. This real or perceived obstacle must be overcome. Immediate and serious conversations that are directed towards changing the educational outcomes and risk status of Black and Hispanic/Latino males must begin. It is imperative that a statewide multiracial, cross-discipline strategy that includes families, educators, state agencies, community and civic representatives, faith-based organizations, and legislators, among others, be established to give guidance and resolution to the problems of disparate performance and unequal opportunities, and consequences for students based on race and gender.

George A. Coleman
Interim Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education



A Two-Day Conference: Addressing the Achievement of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Students

Closing Connecticut's achievement gaps is one of the major goals of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and the State Education Resource Center (SERC). Over the past fifteen years, the analysis of the student achievement data compiled by the CSDE, coupled with data from other agencies, including the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Labor, Department of Juvenile Justice, Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), and the Department of Corrections has led to particular concern about the status of Black and Hispanic/Latino male students and the widening achievement gaps between students by race and gender. Traditionally, male students have not achieved at the same rate as female students in reading and writing; recent data trends indicate an escalating disparity in mathematics achievement. Within the general male student demographic, the performance disparity among Black and Hispanic/Latino male students and White students is even more pronounced. Beyond elementary school, the disparity widens as these students progress through the grade levels.

This two-day conference is designed to illuminate the condition and plight of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/Latino male students, as well as lessons from successes within Connecticut and across the country. It will provide an opportunity to convene representatives from various state constituencies (e.g., community members, educators, families, and representatives from faith-based organizations, state agencies, and CT-based civic organizations) to engage in courageous dialogues regarding the achievement of male students. Participants will explore issues, perspectives, and dialogue about strategies and approaches in order to meet the academic and social/emotional needs of Black and Hispanic/Latino male students and improve school participation and success.

Pre-Conference

Friday, March 30, 2007

AGENDA

4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Registration/Networking**

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. **Welcome/Opening Remarks**

George A. Coleman, Interim Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. **Dinner/Reflection Questions for
Small Group Conversations**

6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m. **A Look at Connecticut Data**

Marcus Rivera, Consultant
Adrian R. Wood, Ph.D., Consultant
Bureau of Educational Equity
Connecticut State Department of Education

Keynote Address

*Inspiring Success in Black and Hispanic/
Latino Male Students*

Reverend Dr. Floyd Flake, Senior Pastor
Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral Church,
Queens, NY

President, Wilberforce University,
Wilberforce, OH

Listening to Student Voices

A Panel of Connecticut Students:

Amistad Academy
Branford High School
Manchester High School
New London High School

7:50 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. **Wrap-up/Evaluation**

About the Pre-Conference

Keynote Speaker....



Former U.S. Representative, Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake is the Senior Pastor of the 10,000 member Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church in Jamaica, Queens, New York. Dr. Flake is also the President of Wilberforce University, in Wilberforce, Ohio.

In the U.S. Congress, Representative Floyd Flake established a reputation for bipartisan, innovative legislative initiatives to revitalize urban commercial and residential communities.

Before assuming the pastorate of Allen Church, Reverend Flake was the Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center and Dean of the Chapel at Boston University following a successful stint as Associate Dean of Students at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He is a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Social and Economic Policy, a columnist for the *New York Post*, and a member of the Fannie Mae Foundation Board of Directors.

Conference

Saturday, March 31, 2007

AGENDA

- 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. **Registration/Networking**
- 8:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. **Welcome/Opening Remarks**
George A. Coleman
Interim Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education
- 8:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. **Keynote Address**
*The Education Conversation We Must Have—
Schooling, Globalization, and Urban America*
Rudolph “Rudy” Crew, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- 10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. **Conference Logistics and Organization**
- 10:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. **Break**
- 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. **A.M. Concurrent Sessions**
(Illuminating the Problem)
- 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. **P.M. Concurrent Sessions**
(Solutions – Learning from Our Successes)
- 3:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. **Closure/Evaluation**

About the Conference

Keynote Speaker....



Dr. Rudolph F. "Rudy" Crew is Superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools. He has defined three priorities for the school district: eliminating low-performing schools, increasing academic achievement for all students, and bringing cost-efficiency to the district's construction and business practices.

During his twenty-five years as an educator, Dr. Crew has served as an administrator, teacher, college professor, and coordinator of special programs and staff development. Throughout his career, he has dedicated his talents and energies to ensuring a quality education for children from all backgrounds. His work to close the student achievement gaps both nationwide and in districts in which he has served includes the design and implementation of innovative after-school and Saturday programs, mandatory summer school, literacy campaigns, and an extended school day and school year to enable low-achieving students to catch up with their high-achieving peers.

A.M. Concurrent Sessions...

ILLUMINATING THE PROBLEM



Session 1~Social/Emotional Issues Impacting Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Students

Derrick M. Gordon, Ph.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine

This session is designed to provide an opportunity for student voice. In a facilitated dialogue, Black and Hispanic/Latino male students will share what they perceive as their academic and social/emotional needs and the challenges they confront. Participants will have an opportunity to observe Dr. Gordon's dialogue with the students and hear emerging issues and students' points of view on these issues.

Session 2~The Missing Link: What Happens When School, Family, and Community Partnerships Do Not Exist?

Marta Bentham, Coordinator of Family Services, Hartford Public Schools

Merva Jackson, Executive Director, African-Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP)

Nancy Prescott, Executive Director, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)

In order for effective partnerships to develop, the prejudices and prejudgments that prevent meaningful relationships around student achievement must be addressed and eradicated. This session will provide participants with an opportunity to explore issues and barriers that impact effective school, family, and community partnerships with Black and Hispanic/Latino families.

Session 3~Let's Talk About Race: The Dialogue that We are Not Having

Ingrid M. Canady, Consultant, SERC

Elizabeth Horton Sheff, Councilperson, Hartford City Council

Student Representatives from Connecticut's Public Schools

Glenn E. Singleton of the Pacific Educational Group noted that race is one of the hardest topics to discuss in our society (National Staff Development Council, 2002). He noted that people of color often develop different personas, play multiple roles, and wear masks so that their honest expressions are not viewed by White persons as rude or overly emotional. This session will provide participants with an understanding of the conditions and agreements that are necessary in order to engage, sustain, and deepen interracial dialogue about race. Presenters will discuss the critical importance of talking about race in order to address the achievement of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/Latino male students.



Session 4~Instruction: What is Really Beyond the Pages

Jose A. Ortiz, Ph.D., Supervisor of Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs, New Haven Public Schools

In the article, "But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," Gloria Ladson-Billings (1990) discussed the importance of linking schooling and a student's culture. She makes the point that if students' language, culture, heritage, and experiences are valued, used, and incorporated into the classroom, students are more likely to experience success. Teachers/schools must develop culturally responsive instructional strategies and transform information about home and community into effective classroom/school practice (Gay, 2000). However, instructional practices have not changed. This session is designed to expose the disconnect between students' culture and the information presented to them through the curriculum.

Session 5~In the Business World: Necessary Skill Sets Needed by Students

Dudley N. Williams, Jr., District Education Strategy Relations Manager, General Electric, Equipment Services, Stamford

Panel of Representatives from Businesses/Corporations

An important goal of many schools, is to prepare students to compete in a global society. Too often, however, students are graduating from high school and college without the necessary skills. This session is designed to highlight the necessary skills and supports needed by students in order to succeed in a global, competitive workforce.

Session 6 ~ The Gap in Teacher Personnel Preparation and Minority Teacher Recruitment

Vivian Carlson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Saint Joseph College, West Hartford

During the spring of 2003, the Connecticut State Department of Education and SERC convened a state level team charged with specific issues in addressing achievement gaps. The Teacher Personnel Preparation State Level Team prepared a statement of findings and strategies for continuous improvement and systemic change in educator preparation, including research-based practices designed to close achievement gaps and address concerns of overidentification and the disproportionate number of Black and Hispanic/Latino students in special education. This session will highlight some of the gaps in programming at institutions of higher education.

A.M. Concurrent Sessions... (continued)

ILLUMINATING THE PROBLEM

Session 7~Connecticut's Schools: What is the Data Telling Us?

Amarildo Monsalve, Consultant

Diane Murphy, Consultant

Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment,
Connecticut State Department of Education

In 2002, the Harvard University Civil Rights Project noted that students of color are more likely than White students to be suspended or expelled. The overrepresentation of Black and Hispanic/Latino males in special education has long been recognized as a concern, yet it remains unresolved. This session will provide an overview of Connecticut's data as it relates to the overrepresentation of Black and Hispanic/Latino male students in special education. In addition, suspension and expulsion data will be discussed.

Session 8~Middle and High School Students: Seeing the Gifts and Talents in Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Students

David Adams, Educational Manager, College Board,
New England Regional Office, Waltham, MA

This session will focus on Advanced Placement (AP) data trends for students in Connecticut, in comparison to national public data. Also, the impact of Advanced Placement courses on four-year college graduation rates for Black and Hispanic/Latino students will be discussed. The presenter will highlight tools to assist in the identification of "diamond-in-the-rough" AP students, and resources/data available at no cost to schools and districts through the College Board in order to assist them in seeing the gifts and talents in all students, especially Black and Hispanic/Latino males.



P.M. Concurrent Sessions...

SOLUTIONS/LEARNING FROM OUR SUCCESSES

Session 9~Making a Difference through Positive Behavior Supports

Madeline Negron, Principal, Windham Middle School, Windham Public Schools

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) is a proactive, comprehensive, systemic, and individualized continuum of support designed to establish a positive school environment. This session is designed to highlight the ten basic steps used by Windham Middle School to implement school-wide PBS in order to create an environment conducive to meeting the diverse academic and behavioral needs of students. The school's academic and behavioral data on Black and Hispanic/Latino male students will be shared.

Session 10~Fostering School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Judy Carson, Consultant

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Bureau Chief

Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/Schools Partnerships
Connecticut State Department of Education

Research has demonstrated that fostering school/family/community partnerships significantly contributes, in a variety of ways, to improved student outcomes and school success. This session is designed to provide an overview of the Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/Schools Partnerships. Participants will have an opportunity to hear about other schools and community programs with regard to innovations they have incorporated in order to foster school, family, and community partnerships, in particular for Black and Hispanic/Latino families.

Session 11~The Power of Courageous Conversations About Race

Linnet Carty, Consultant, SERC

Representatives from Districts Participating in Courageous Conversations

Over the past three years, SERC has worked closely with a selected group of districts in an engaging professional development program designed to identify, define, and examine the connection between race and student achievement. In conjunction with Glenn E. Singleton and SERC Coaches, participating districts have engaged in "Courageous Conversations About Race" as a means to examine philosophies, policies, procedures, and practices in their district, schools, and classrooms that reflect institutionalized racism. The session will provide reflections from participating Courageous Conversations districts on their journeys to achieve equity for all students.

Session 12~Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Transforming Partnerships with Home and Community into Effective Classroom/School Practice

Marcus Rivera, Consultant, Bureau of Educational Equity, Connecticut State Department of Education

Agnes Quinones, Consultant, Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/Schools Partnerships

Panel of Representatives from Connecticut Public Schools

Ron Edmonds (1979) suggested that to be truly effective a school must challenge all students, and must close the achievement gap between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition, Edmonds stated that high expectations for students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, and effective family/community involvement are cornerstones of effective schools research. He goes on to say that schools must have a climate of high expectations reflected in staff and family beliefs, and must demonstrate that all students can attain mastery of the essential content and school skills. This session is designed to explore the questions: (1) Why are certain schools achieving at higher levels? and (2) What are these schools doing differently to improve academic outcomes for students, specifically for Black and Hispanic/Latino male students?

Session 13~The Role of Institutions of Higher Education in Closing Achievement Gaps

Alfred Carter, Dean of Students, Manchester Community College

Panel of Representatives from Institutions of Higher Education

What are institutions of higher education doing to ensure that all students, including Black and Hispanic/Latino males, are graduating with the necessary skill sets to compete in a global, competitive workforce? This session is designed to explore the skills needed to translate that knowledge into effective culturally responsive instruction.

Session 14~Culturally Responsive Teacher Personnel Preparation: The Response of Institutions of Higher Education

Eddie L. Davis, Ph.D., Former Superintendent, Danbury

Panel of Representatives from Institutions of Higher Education

Connecticut public schools are increasingly becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse. This requires changes in personnel preparation and minority recruitment. This session is designed to provide an opportunity for representatives from Connecticut institutions of higher education to share programming and practices in place to assist educators in addressing the achievement gaps, specifically to become knowledgeable about the various cultural backgrounds of students and to acquire the necessary skills to translate that knowledge into effective culturally responsive instruction.

Session 15~Effectively Utilizing Data to Focus Areas of Improvement

Barry L. Davis, Assistant Principal, Metropolitan Learning Center,
Bloomfield

M. Leon McKinley, Leader-in-Residence, School Improvement Unit,
Connecticut State Department of Education

Panel of Representatives from Connecticut Public Schools

This session is designed to provide an overview of the components of the *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative* supported by the School Improvement Unit at the Connecticut State Department of Education, in collaboration with the Center for Performance Assessment. These components include: Data-Driven Decision Making/Data Teams; Making Standards Work; and Effective Teaching Strategies. These powerful practices for improving student learning are heavily connected to effective schools research and provide practical strategies for addressing school reform efforts connected to student achievement. Participants will hear from schools/districts who have utilized their data to focus on the improvement of outcomes for Black and Hispanic/Latino male students.

Session 16~Reducing the Achievement Gaps: Wisdom from School Leaders

Jeanne H. Purcell, Ph.D., Consultant, Bureau of Curriculum and
Instruction, Connecticut State Department of Education

Representatives from Connecticut Public Schools

One of the greatest challenges facing education in the 21st century is ensuring that all students have access to pathways that lead seamlessly to college success. Many students, especially those from large urban cities or isolated rural areas, face intractable barriers such as: limited access to rigorous coursework; lack of aspirations; insufficient knowledge about the college application process and financial aid programs; and inadequate study skills that are required in advanced-level course work and college. In this session, participants will hear from school leaders in Connecticut who have begun to address these barriers in their schools. Each will have the opportunity to share practical, easily replicable strategies that they have used to increase Black and Hispanic/Latino male students' readiness for college.



Registration Information:

Registration will be on a "first come, first served" basis. Participants may attend one or both days. There is a registration fee of \$30.00 per person for the pre-conference and \$50.00 for the conference.

Purchase orders will be accepted, and payment **MUST** be received prior to March 30, 2007.

The closing date for registration is March 12, 2007.

Check or purchase order should be made payable to: Rensselaer at Hartford. Limited fee waivers and substitute coverage stipends are available. Interested participants should indicate need for a waiver or stipend in writing and attach to application form. Please submit registration with check or purchase order to:

SERC, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1520,
c/o: Nicole M. Vitale.

**Applicants will receive written confirmation
shortly after the closing date.**

Direct registration questions to Nicole M. Vitale, Education Services Specialist, (860) 632-1485, ext. 234, or vitale@ctserc.org. For content questions, please contact David R. Grice, Consultant, at ext. 343, or grice@ctserc.org.

CEU Information:

SERC will award .7 CEUs for the conference (March 31st).

Participants must be preregistered, receive written confirmation from SERC, complete the conference evaluation form, and provide evidence of post-conference application/reflection. Evaluation forms and information about post-application/reflection responsibility will be available at the conference on the 31st.

Location Information:

Directions to the Four Points by Sheraton in Meriden will be included in written confirmation of participation.

Application Form: March 2007 Two-Day Conference

Addressing the Achievement of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Students
(Please print clearly.)

07-24-010/011/NV



- Yes, I plan to attend the pre-conference on March 30, 2007 (\$30 registration fee)
- Yes, I plan to attend the conference on March 31, 2007 (\$50 registration fee)

Name: _____ Title: _____

School/Organization: _____ District: _____

Home Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please check all that apply:
____ Please check for vegetarian meal. ____ Please check for interpreter services (type: _____).



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