



African American Achievement Task Force

Springfield Public Schools

“The Road To Success Begins With You”

2009-10

African American Task Force Report 2009-10

Table of Contents

	Page
Task Force Members	3
Timeline	4
Task Force Report	
Introduction.....	5
2009-10 African American Task Force List of Issues.....	5
Sub-Committee Selected List of Top Issues.....	6
Sub-Committee Questions for Students.....	6
Student Remarks to Sub-Committee Questions.....	7
Curriculum	6
Counseling/Relationships	6
African American Task Force 2010 Recommendations	8
Action Plan One	8
Action Plan Two.....	8
Action Plan Three	8
Action Plan Four	8
Appendix	9
Appendix A: Task Force Agenda for 11/19/09.....	9
Appendix B: Task Force Agenda for 2/3/10	10
Appendix C: Task Force Agenda for 3/5/10.....	11
PowerPoint Handout (Statistics).....	12

Task Force on African American Achievement

Name	Position
Mr. Calvin Allen	Springfield Community Center/Community
Mrs. Avis Burton-Moore	Assistant Principal, Glendale High School
Mrs. Diana Byrd	Elementary Instructional Specialist
Mr. Deric Cofield	Community Member
Mr. Mark Dixon	Community Member, Advocate
Mr. Les Ford	Middle School Executive Director
Mr. Matt Goodman	Director of Quality Improvement/Accountability
Mr. Billy Gosnell	Administrative Liaison
Mr. Antonio Green	Community Member, Parent
Mr. Ben Hackenwerth	Elementary Executive Director
Ms. Pam Hankins	Co-Director of Staff Development
Dr. Justin Herrell	High School Executive Director
Mr. Art Hodge	President, National Action Network
Mrs. Denise Kelly	Communication Arts Facilitator
Ms. Angela Kimbrough	Principal, Holland Elementary
Mrs. Sheryl Looney	Community Member, Parent
Mrs. Veronica Lowe	Community Member/Parent/OTC
Ms. Rhonda Mammen	Counseling/Title IV Coordinator
Ms. Gwen Marshall	Cultural Diversity Specialist
Ms. Marilyn Monroe	Principal, Weller Elementary
Dr. Kelvin Pamperien	Director, Instructional Improvement
Mrs. Jennifer Petersen	Mathematics Facilitator
Mrs. Francine Pratt	President, Springfield NAACP
Dr. Nate Quinn	Coordinator of Cultural Diversity
Mr. Lester Ratcliff	Teacher, Reed Middle School
Dr. Norm Ridder	Superintendent, Springfield Public Schools
Mr. Ozzie Riley	Teacher, Central High School
Dr. Ron Snodgrass	Principal, Central High School
Mrs. Ann White	Administrative Liaison/ Instructional Specialist
Mr. Tim Zeigler	Principal, Pipkin Middle School

Timeline for African American Achievement Task Force:

- 9/12/09 MAP and AYP data to Principals
- 9/17/09 Data regarding African American Achievement and related figures gathered to share with Task Force at the first meeting
- 10/5/09 Invitational letters emailed and personal contacts made to potential Task Force membership
- 11/19/09 African American Achievement Task Force Leadership meeting
- 2/3/10 African American Achievement Task Force Sub-Committee meeting
- 3/5/10 African American Achievement Task Force Sub-Committee meeting:
- 5/4/10 Draft information sent to African American Task Force asking for final suggestions and comments.
- 8/30/10 Final draft submitted to Dr. Ridder.

Task Force Report

Introduction

The African American Task Force reconvened during the 2009-10 school year with the purpose of reviewing the 2008 recommendations and evaluating the progress toward those recommendations.

The Task Force met November 19, 2009 and then a Sub-Committee met on February 3, 2010 and March 5, 2010. The sub-committee reviewed factors that were submitted by the Task Force on November 19, 2009. The sub-committee categorized and selected the top four factors that were deemed most important. The sub-committee also interviewed a panel of approximately six high school students about their experiences with Springfield Public Schools.

At the conclusion of the three Task Force meetings, four action plans were submitted that would involve the collaboration of the district, community, parents, and students.

November 19, 2009 African American Task Force List of Issues

- Beginning with a gap
- Establish a youth committee to address closing gap
- Relevance of learning to their world
- Belief in themselves
- Motivate them – listen to them
- Opportunities to connect
- Limited Life experiences
- Expand early contacts
- “How to” instruction: How to do school; how to recognize social acceptance; how to be successful
- Establish a focused goal with data to determine progress
- Lack of parental instruction
- Hopelessness
- Go to the audience – hold a meeting with them
- Need to focus more on K-3rd grade
- Parental involvement
- Set higher expectations
- Trust understanding of where students are coming from
- Moms raising families – lack of role models early on
- Students coming with more deficits
- Unrealistic expectation that teachers are supposed to do it all
- Someone dedicated to oversee school needs
- Parents not having the time to spend with students
- Lack of discipline in homes

- Parents trying to be friends with children rather than parents
- School readiness skills
- Family perceptions of school/education – comfort level/trust
- Discipline blame on schools – parents not taking responsibility
- Mobility rate?
- Support of learning at home
- Lack of positive influences
- Relationship with adult at school
- Background knowledge/experiences
- Overall lack of motivation to do well academically
- Valuing Education
- Level of education of parents
- Attendance
- Reading, writing, arithmetic skill level is below their peers (background knowledge)
- Reading skills
- Skills coming into kindergarten
- “Gap” coming in at the start of schooling

**Sub-Committee Selected Top Issues for African American Students
February 3, 2010**

- Mentoring
 - Identification of Organizations
 - Identification of Students
- Student Motivation
 - Why education is important?
 - Intrinsic Motivation
- Parent Involvement Programs
 - Role Models
 - Parental Discipline Strategies
 - Setting Expectations
 - School Readiness
- Emphasize on major assessments
 - Improve communication with parents about testing.
 - Improve community involvement in MAP and ACT preparation.

Sub-Committee Questions for African American Students on March 5, 2010

Student Questions

1. How do you feel about your education in Springfield Public Schools?
2. How do you feel African American students are treated by school personnel, other students, and by other African Americans?
3. Do you feel that African American students value education? Why or Why not?

4. What would help African American students improve their grades?
5. What would help African American students improve in MAP and ACT testing?

Student Remarks

Question 1: How do you feel about your education in Springfield Public Schools?

- Teachers have been willing to work with African American students.
- Equal opportunity is provided.
- Teachers have given them assistance after school.
- Felt good about getting help from teachers in most cases.
- In middle school, they did not know about the IB Program and the test to take for it. Needed better communication at the middle school level.

Question 2: How do you feel African American students are treated by school personnel, other students, and by other African Americans?

- Students were treated fairly by staff.
- White students are often intimidated by smart black students.
- Some negative actions by some African American student's cause negative issues for other African American students. People try to put everybody in the same group.

Question 3: Do you feel that African American students value education? Why or Why not?

- Some students do and some don't value education.
- The motivation of the student is important.
- As the student matures, you realize you need an education.
- Did not think about the value of education at an early age, but later she had to start working hard to get good grades.
- Motivate students more at the middle school level.
- Students are not interested in the test if it does not affect the grade. Need explanation of why the test is important.
- Students need to be more involved.
- Middle school students don't care too much about the information.
- Students are afraid to ask questions because it may be considered a "stupid question."

Question 4: What would help African American students improve their grades?

- More motivation from parents and friends would help.
- Have friends that make better grades.
- More teacher motivation. Spend more time making calls and 1 on 1 time.
- Study groups after school at school, library, or at a friend's house.
- Students must be able to make the choice to do better. It is their choice.

Question 5: What would help African American students improve in MAP and ACT testing?

- Take ACT Prep classes.
- Go to Super Saturday's.
- Group workshops for students.

Main Ideas

- Focus on Middle School
- Information about programs and assessments
- Importance of the assessments and programs
- Student motivation

Recommendations

Action Plan One: Increase opportunities for mentoring of African American students.

- Provide opportunities for mentoring groups to work with high school and middle school students.
- Encourage community groups to become more involved with mentoring projects.

Action Plan Two: Increase the level of student motivation by providing more academic workshops and opportunities for African American students.

- Provide a career and life skills workshop for students.
- Provide ACT informational presentation.
- Assist with African American Read In Program.

Action Plan Three: Increase parent involvement by providing information about becoming a positive role model, parental discipline strategies, setting expectations and school readiness.

- Provide positive role model information in newsletters, handouts, and on the website.
- Provide academic and discipline strategies in newsletters, handouts, and on the website.
- Provide information on school readiness and setting expectations for students.

Action Plan Four: Emphasize the importance of all assessments, notify stakeholders of assessment deadlines and dates, and encourage students' best efforts on all assessments.

- Notify stakeholders of assessment deadlines and dates.
- Use African American paper to inform parents and students of the importance of all assessments.

African American Task Force

Appendix

African American Achievement Task Force

November 19, 2009
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions– Dr. Nate Quinn
2. Vision and Objective – Dr. Nate Quinn
3. Purpose/Non Purpose/Norms
4. Current Achievement Data
Dr. Matt Goodman – Director of Quality Improvement and Accountability
5. 2007 Action Plan Presentation
6. Issues
What are the top 3 issues affecting Springfield African American Student Achievement?
 - Thinkpad Brainstorm
 - Affinity Chart
 - Gallery Walk
7. Sub-Committee for Task Force
 - Meeting Date
 - Topics will be determined by the top 3 issues.
8. Closure

Information posted on SPS Cultural Diversity website: Look for African American Task Force.

<http://www.springfieldpublicschoolsno.org/culturaldiversity/index.htm>

African American Task Force Sub-Committee Agenda February 3, 2010

Introductions (2 min)

Review of Factors

- Determine appropriate category for factors (5 min)
 - Other categories to consider – community, student, community organizations, law enforcement, workforce, social services, etc...
- Determine meaning of factors (20 min)
- Discussion of factors in most need of attention (15 min)
- Select 3 major factors to address and define the question for each. (10 min)

Next meeting: Bring ideas/message of how to address the factors, (groups involved, level of involvement, how to reach the intended parties, etc...)

Example: Lack of parental instruction

1. What areas of instruction?
2. Who should tell them they need instruction?
3. What is the instruction?
4. How do we get this message to them?
5. ETC...

Set next meeting date: Suggest March 5, 2010 @ 3:00 pm

Adjourn: 4:00 pm

African American Task Force Sub-Committee Agenda March 5, 2010

Introduction of Students

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Review of Factors

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 - Identification of Students
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Closing: Report sent to full committee by Sept 7, 2010.



PowerPoint Presentation