PROMOTING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES: THE ACHIEVERS MODEL FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE OF K-12 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Wanda J. McNair

Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Regent University
April 2013
Abstract

The purpose of this Applied Doctoral Project (ADP) was to conceptualize a framework for a charter school program design to promote the academic achievement of a select group of African American males. Gorton, Alston, and Snowden (2007) emphasized that school improvement involves change for the better. The National Education Goals Panel (NEGP), a bipartisan group to promote national goals, stresses three goals for education reform: a preschool child’s readiness to learn, decreasing the dropout rate, and the mastery of core content by grades 4, 8, and 12. In spite of these goals, African American males fail to meet academic standards and drop out of high school at disproportionate rates compared to White students. Although many factors contribute to the low achievement of African American males, research shows that students who are taught based on their unique needs by an autonomous group that is free to customize its curriculum will meet those needs (Center for Education Reform, 2011; Gleason, Clark, Tuttle, & Dwouer, 2010; Hoxby, 2005; Hoxby, Murarka, & Kang, 2009; Merseth, 2009). For instance, Smith (2006) posited that “… researchers believe that character development, especially at the secondary level, is increasingly important because of the perceived decline in moral conduct among young adults and the high-profile corporate scandals of the past few years” (p. 14). Since the lack of morality and character is what many researchers (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2003; Ferrara & Santiago, 2007; Hopkins, 1997; Munoz & Vanderhaar, 2006; J. A. Sherblom, Marshall, & Sherblom, 2006) say are the precipitating factors for the downturn in academic achievement, the social and academic success of African American males can be promoted by utilizing the ACHIEVERS Model for systemic change in all K-12 educational programs and services.