

## Why Focus on Black Male Achievement?

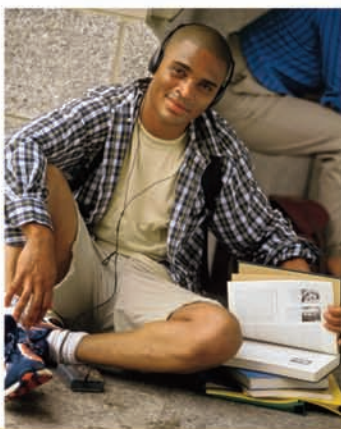


Black males represent a demographically identifiable subgroup facing unique barriers and requiring culturally responsive strategies. Through partnerships with schools, mentoring programs, faith organizations, community agencies, and parents, we

are pursuing strategic conversations focused on achieving systemic and sustainable increases in Black male achievement. These conversations are facilitated by Mychal Wynn, a child of poverty, product of public education and urban schools, first-generation college graduate, parent of two Black males, author of 26 books, and board member of the National Council on Educating Black Children.

Through Mr. Wynn's extensive experience, participants are introduced to strategies that are responsive to:

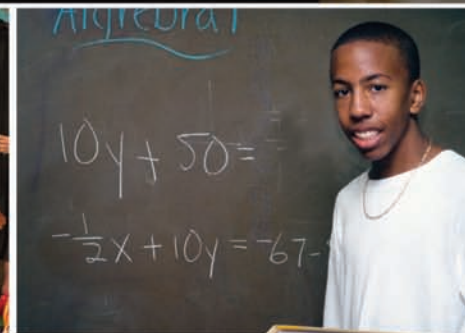
- the unique socioeconomic, cultural, gender, and academic barriers confronting Black males,
- the cross-gender, cross-cultural, cross-generational, and cross-socioeconomic gaps experienced by students and classroom teachers,
- the predictable college knowledge gap experienced by children living in poverty,
- the peer and societal pressures that attempt to define their place and limit their college/career aspirations,
- the predictable cultural isolation experienced when enrolled in advanced academic classes or pursuing activities outside of group and societal cultural norms, and
- the institutional and community culture of low academic expectations.



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Increasing Black male achievement will require a commitment to engaging in an ongoing process of strategic discussions, implementation of strategies, data gathering, and debriefing. There is no other way.

— Mychal Wynn  
Author of *Teaching, Parenting, and Mentoring Successful Black Males*



## Research-Responsive Strategies

The most courageous conversations are “research-responsive” and strategically focused. Encouragement, support, interventions, and enrichment strategies are responsive to disaggregated data indicating that Black males disproportionately:

- live in poverty;
- live in single-parent, female-headed households;
- lack access to preschool readiness programs;
- attend high-poverty, low-performing, urban schools;
- are suspended and expelled from school;
- are underrepresented in gifted and talented programs; and
- are overrepresented in special education programs.

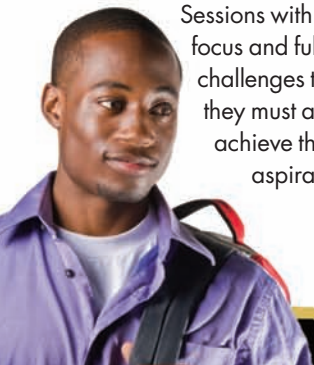
Disaggregated campus and district data will oftentimes reflect:

- low math, science, and reading performance in the primary grades,
- under enrollment in advanced middle school course work,
- under enrollment in honors and AP classes in high school,
- low PSAT, SAT, and ACT performance, and
- low high school graduation and college enrollment rates.

Each school, community, and household is challenged with conceptualizing strategies that are responsive to such data in ways that result in measurable increases in student achievement.

## Student-Focused Sessions

Sessions with students inspire hope, provide focus and fully inform students of the challenges they must overcome and pitfalls they must avoid if they are to pursue and achieve their future dreams and aspirations.



## Parent-Focused Sessions

These sessions sensitize parents to the need for early intervention, strengthen home-school collaboration, and demonstrate the importance of creating a household culture that makes academic achievement a family priority.



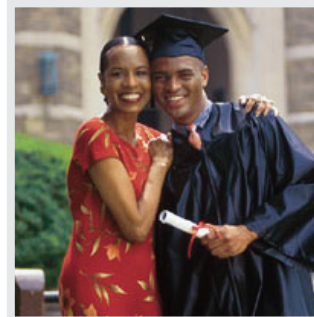
## Educator-Focused Sessions

These sessions engage educators in courageous conversations about expectations, school climate and culture, disaggregated student achievement data, institutional barriers, and the sense of urgency needed to achieve systemic and sustainable increases in Black male achievement.



## Faith- and Community-Focused Sessions

Faith and community organizations are presented with practical strategies for encouraging, supporting, recognizing, and celebrating a community-wide culture of high academic expectations. Community members also learn how to partner with local schools to move more Black males on to the primary-to-postsecondary pathway to college.



## What People are Saying:

*In all of my years working with adjudicated and incarcerated youth, I have rarely witnessed teachers capable of capturing the attention of young men in the way in which Mr. Wynn does. He is able to confront them without being confrontational, inspire them without relying on positive affirmations or meaningless platitudes, and he is able to present them with disaggregated student achievement data that cause them to sit up and pay attention.*

Title I Program Coordinator  
Los Angeles County Office of Education

*I was amazed at how the young Black and Hispanic males in my Sociology class were enthralled with Mr. Wynn's presentation regarding the plight of Black men and decisions that they are making, which lead to their own destruction. In the vernacular of the young men in today's generation, "Mr. Wynn is keeping it real." He causes them to think, to reflect, to project, and to plan.*

Professor  
Solano College  
Suisun, CA

*Mychal Wynn has helped me to lift my school to the achievement levels that I had hoped for. We had the highest increase in reading scores (26 percent) of any elementary school in our district. Our*

*teachers are using all of the books, Building Dreams, The Eagles who thought They were Chickens, and Fight-Free Schools. Our parents are a part of our team and they are practicing the principles outlined in Ten Steps to Helping Your Child Succeed in School. Our children, especially our young men, are being inspired to dream, they are internalizing our core values, and they are already focusing on a future that includes college.*



Principal  
Flower City School  
Rochester, NY

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