OUR EDUCATION

EDUCATION ASSESSMENT & RESEARCH PROJECT

Santa Clara County
African/African Ancestry
Research Project & Demographic Study
THE BLACK LEADERSHIP KITCHEN CABINET
AFRICAN/AFRICAN ANCESTRY
EDUCATION ASSESSMENT & RESEARCH PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

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JUNE 25, 2018
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Letter from Brenda Smith-Ray, Community Elder

Beloved community, we are all familiar with the saying, “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.” In the year of 1999 the City of San Jose commissioned A Demographic Profile of the African American Community in San Jose and Santa Clara County. The report contained four recommendations. Unfortunately, only one of the recommendations was implemented. Symbolically, we as a community, only took a sip of the water to which we were led.

This Education Assessment and Research Project is more comprehensive than the one which preceded it in 1999. My request is that you read the Key Findings with your heart. Drink from our collective wisdom, and examine your conscience. This report, although painful reading, reflects our truth, our perspective, our experiences, and our hope.

After thirty years of employment in this county’s educational institutions, including eighteen years operating a private, Afro-centric school, my heart continues to ache for our students. This report affirms that our students encounter a variety of problems in Bay Area school systems (public and private). The key domains of inquiry in this research were: quality education, barriers, policies, and discrimination. The report findings validate personal accounts in which the valley is depicted as a toxic environment for students of African/African Ancestry. No one is qualified to change a system he does not understand. May this report educate and empower you to make necessary changes on behalf of our children.

This report may provide answers to your long-held questions, as it held the answers to some of mine. My questions were: Why do we and/or our students resist being referred to as “Africans”? Why do many youths exude shame of their culture and skin color? Why are our students threatened on school campuses by students and adults? Why would a middle school male silently pay a bodyguard for years? Why are our youth and young adults leaving our churches? Why are our male students suspended at such a high percentage rate? Why are so many of our boys sitting outside the classroom or in the office? Why do our young adults who leave the valley for college not return? Why are our college graduates refused employment because they are not a “cultural fit?” Why would an 8-year-old black boy not know who Martin Luther King was?

As a member of the Civil Rights era, I often feel the need to apologize to our young because when we taught them that they were equal to others, we neglected to teach them that others did not view them as such. We denied the failure of integration, so they were not taught how to recognize racism nor given the tools to fight it. Do your children know your stories of survival and how you cope with injustice? If not, who do they turn to for guidance? How do they handle the incongruities, shame, insecurity, embarrassment, and our denial of their experiences? Perhaps this report will encourage us to open our eyes and our hearts to a commitment of vocal visibility and support for all our students.

Education, unlike basketball and football, is not a spectator sport. Please get off the bench and get in the game! Our Silicon Valley community needs rebuilding, although numerous organizations have performed extraordinary work in our community. However, united we can be even more effective and supportive. Can we unite, confront the challenges, cut the criticism, and eradicate the barriers our students encounter? I believe we can. President Obama said, “We are the change we seek.” Sisters and brothers, “where there is a will, there is a way.”
Letter to the Santa Clara County, African/African Ancestry Community

June 24, 2018

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) of Santa Clara County was established in 2005 with a mission to promote and establish initiatives, programs, policies and legislative reforms that improve public safety, educational outcomes, economic prosperity and the social well-being of individuals and families within the county’s African/African Ancestry community. The BLKC membership is composed of community leaders that represent more than fifty organizations.

The BLKC elected to conduct an updated Demographic Study on the lives of African/African Ancestry community members of Santa Clara County. The BLKC referenced the landmark Santa Clara County African American Demographic Study developed in 1999 by Mason Tillman Associates, for a baseline comparative for this study.

Pastor Lee Wilson, Senior Pastor of Open Bible Church, stated that the BLKC needed to conduct a study and assessment of the education systems affecting African/African Ancestry Students and Families of Santa Clara County, to determine the “truth” about racism and our education. It is to his leadership and vision, that we dedicate this study to him.

In keeping with the BLKC mission, with the leadership of Walter Wilson, Community activist and business owner, Yvonne Maxwell, Executive Director of Ujima Adult and Family Services, Debra Watkins, Executive Director of “A Black Education Network” (ABEN), Brenda Smith Ray, education consultant, owner and President of Della Productions, Leon Beauchman and Carolyn Johnson, President and Vice President, respectively, of the Santa Clara Alliance of Black Educators, Sharon Ogbor, Vice President of Development at ALearn, Tony Alexander, former school board member and consultant, our Assessment Research and clerical supporters, Kenisha Makau, MPH, and Ania A. Ray, MHA, worked collaboratively with world renown education researchers, Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman, and their team of researchers, to conduct this BLKC African/African Ancestry Education assessment and Research Project. We want to take this opportunity to thank each of them as well as the over 700 participants in this study.

Similar to our previous Health Assessment and Research Project, this education assessment and study will:

- Be of, for and by the African/African Ancestry communities of Santa Clara County
- Be a living document with regular updates
- Act as a “road map” with documented successes and challenges
- Provide accurate data on all aspects of the lives of the African/African Ancestry community
- Adopt and implement “Best practices” throughout the African/African Ancestry communities
- Provide direction and information for policy makers that can be used when prioritizing services and resources for the African/African Ancestry community
- Act as the basis for a “Call to Action” for the community, policy makers, businesses and others that have a vested interest in the education and social well-being of the African/African Ancestry community in Santa Clara County.

With support from the City of San Jose, the Santa Clara County Office of Education and First 5 of Santa Clara County, a collaborative partnership began to develop the education assessment component of the larger African/African Ancestry Demographic Study. Professional researchers Joyce E. King, PhD and Linda C. Tillman, PhD were contracted to assist with the education assessment. The data was gathered from the African/African Ancestry community that captures the heart and feelings of the Santa Clara County’s African/African Ancestry community. The process developed during this education assessment will be used as a “template” for the remaining components of the African/African Ancestry Demographic Study. Other components of the African/African Ancestry Demographic Study will focus on social services, economic development, criminal justice and social/civic engagement, technology and cultural arts. As the Project Co-Chairs, we say thank you to everyone who has contributed to this education assessment and to those who will be involved in the upcoming components of the Demographic Study.

A very special thanks to our sponsors and major funders, CEO of First 5 Santa Clara County, Jolene Smith and First 5 Board Chairperson, Santa Clara County Supervisor, Ken Yeager, as well as Superintendent of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Dr. Mary Ann Dewan. Thanks to the city of San Jose for a mini grant to kick start this effort. Thanks to Unity Care Group for their support as our project’s fiscal sponsor. Your support is invaluable to the success of this important Research study, and we will look to your continued support as we advance solutions to creating better quality education for the African/African Ancestry communities of Santa Clara County.

Thank you,

Yvonne Maxwell, Executive Director, Ujima Adult and Family Services, BLKC Co-Chair and BLKC Education Assessment and study Co-Chair

Walter Wilson, African American Cultural Center Project, Board member, BLKC Education Assessment and study Co-Chair
The Santa Clara County Office of Education is pleased to have collaborated with the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet and Unity Care Group on the African/African Ancestry Education Assessment and Research Project. It is my hope that this research can help educators in transforming education through equity, access, achievement, and inclusion so all students have what they need to succeed.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet, Unity Care Group, all the community organizations and individuals that contributed their time to be part of this important project.

Dr. Mary Ann Dewan
County Superintendent of Schools
Santa Clara County Office of Education
August 1, 2018

Dear Members of The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley,

The Santa Clara County Office of Education is pleased to have collaborated with the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet and Unity Care Group on the African/African Ancestry Education Assessment and Research Project. It is my hope that this research can help educators and community to transform education through equity, diversity, partnership, and inclusion in order that all students have what they need to thrive.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet, Unity Care Group, First 5 Santa Clara County, and all the community organizations and individuals that contributed their time to this important project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Ann Dewan
County Superintendent of Schools
Santa Clara County Office of Education

October 12, 2017

Dear Members of The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley,

The FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission invested $150,000 in fiscal year 2017/2018 to partially fund the design, implementation, analysis and written report of the findings of an African/African Ancestry Early Learning Assessment in Santa Clara County.

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinets of Silicon Valley and FIRST 5 Santa Clara County have a common desire to ensure families thrive and reach their full potential. FIRST 5 ensures that high-quality early learning programs are available so that our young children are fully ready to succeed in school and life. The Black Leadership Education Assessment Committee endeavors to ensure Santa Clara County families of African descent are provided the tools and opportunities that contribute toward their academic achievement.

The goal of The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley Early Learning Assessment is to gather qualitative and quantitative data about African/African Ancestry children (birth through age 8) to identify the education needs of this population. Results may be used to strategically allocate resources; plan services; inform and design programs and professional development; and address educational inequalities and disparities. The assessments will provide an opportunity to engage with the local African/African Ancestry community and work collaboratively to obtain information most important to them.

We look forward to working together on this project.

Sincerely,

Johane Smith
Chief Executive Officer
FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Education Assessment & Research Project

Final Report
Joyce E. King, PhD
Linda C. Tillman, PhD
June 28, 2018

The United States has experienced cycles of tyranny since its inception. For some the United States represents only this experience. A disillusioned liberal establishment has begun to worry that this country might be losing its democracy. However, the democracy some fear to lose was never achieved for many of us in the first place. (Samudzi & Anderson, 2018, p. 1)

The question of African centered education is fundamental to our very humanity. It is more than educating Black children for work or employability. We were fully employed (without payment) during our 400 hundred + years of enslavement. The bigger question is how education for African American children prepares them to manage and master the future. While the immediate issues of educating to facilitate marketability in various high paying fields of employment; organizing the school day; hiring retired Black teachers; and partnering with HBCUs are important, they alone do not address the fundamental question of educating for humanity and the future. (Vera L. Nobles & Wade W. Nobles, 2018)

Introduction

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley (BLKVC) is comprised of fifty plus community based social and civic organizations, mosques, churches, agencies, fraternities, sororities, businesses, and individual community members addressing issues impacting the African/ African Ancestry community. The purpose of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Education Assessment and Research Project was to capture the perspectives and beliefs of community stakeholders, educational leaders, and early childhood professionals and caregivers about the educational goals and experiences of young children and youth of African/African Ancestry within the Santa Clara County community. Based on conversations with the African/African Ancestry Education Steering Committee, the Education Assessment and Research Project investigated four key domains of inquiry: (a) the community’s definition of quality education and African/ African Ancestry (AA) students’ access to quality education; (b) barriers in the education system that AA students experience; (c) policies that are hindering students’ success; and (d) impacts of discrimination and racism as well as best practice solutions.

This Final Report is divided into 5 sections:
1. African/African Ancestry Excellence Traditions Which Shaped Santa Clara County
2. Academic and Cultural Excellence in African/African Ancestry Education Scholarship, Research, and Practice
3. The Research Methodology
4. Four Domains of Inquiry and Key Findings from the Education Assessment
5. Best Practice Solutions and Recommendations: Our Call to Action.

The Education Assessment and Research Project used publicly available information (e.g., Santa Clara County Office of Education data) and gathered data from 649 adults and youth to explore and identify barriers to education in Santa Clara County, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African Ancestry children and youth in the education system. The study examined ways racism and white supremacy impact the community’s academic success, how African/African Ancestry students learn, as well as elements of African centered education. Furthermore, this study provided opportunities for feedback about solutions to help African/African Ancestry children succeed.

In addition to the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the research process (explained in Section 3 and Appendix H.), this education assessment and research project commissioned three original essays. Appendix B presents “A Literature Review: Casserian Engel: Promoting and Supporting Quality Early Childhood Educational Experiences for Black Children” and “Systemic Oppression, Transgenerational Trauma, and the Education of African-American Children”. An historical essay, “The Black Excellence Traditions Which Shaped Santa Clara County,” follows in the next section. These essays were prepared by Dr. Tonia Durden, Dr. Circie A. West-Olatunji, and John William Templeton in collaboration with the lead Researchers Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman. (See Appendix A., About The Researchers; Appendix B., Commissioned Essays).

Santa Clara is the fourth most populous County in California with a resident population of nearly 1.8 million and workforce influx that brings the daytime population to approximately 2.2 million. The County’s 1,312 square miles includes 15 municipalities and numerous special districts, as well as the metropolitan high technology area known worldwide as “Silicon Valley.” Santa Clara is the fourth most populous County in the State and the largest in the San Francisco Bay Area. Though this County is influential and world-renowned because of its contributions to technology, the grade point average for most African/African Ancestry students is 2.0 and the relatively small number of students in Santa Clara County schools contributes to the lack of attention to their specific needs.

Significant and persistent racial disparities that inspired this research include various indicators of disparities in students’ educational attainment as well as disproportionality in rates of suspension and expulsion, placement in foster care, juvenile arrests, and the number of students who are eligible for admission to the University of California (U.C.) and California State University (C.S.U.) systems. For example, while the percent of African/African Ancestry graduates who fulfilled the course requirements for California college/university entrance increased since 2010 from 32% to 39%, African/African Ancestry students still lag significantly behind White (67%) and Asian
American students (79%). This pattern is particularly egregious for African/African Ancestry males, who lag behind African/African Ancestry females in every school district in the County (see The Context, Appendix C.).

"Unlike the well-defined social order of black subservience to whites in the South, race relations in the West were always in flux and conflicted by the region's insincere embrace of racial tolerance and social equality. From 1890 to 1900 discrimination in the South Bay was administered by custom, complacency, and indifference."  
(Ruffin, Uninvited Neighbors, 2014, p. 2)

Section 1
The African/African Ancestry Education Excellence Traditions
Which Shaped Santa Clara County

Society cannot neglect, hate, abuse and oppress a class, a part, without suffering itself; the indulgence of evil passions, the practice of bad conduct, re-act backward and forward; ignorance, vice, crime and suffering abound, and society is the sufferer; intelligent men see this clearly; they regard the education of youth one of the first and most important duties society owes itself; give good instruction to the young and withhold not.  
(Colored Convention of California, 1854)

Education, not escape, is the most important variable in the African/African ancestry freedom struggle since 1854. Santa Clara County is a regionally-important example of the agency of African/ African Ancestry parents to take control of the learning experience of their children. Failure to understand and instill those African/African ancestry educational excellence traditions has caused a deviation from the norm. From 1850 to the present, people of African/African Ancestry in Santa Clara County have placed the highest priority on educating their children, as noted in the statement above, without a commensurate response from local educational institutions. In fact, Santa Clara County public schools waited more than 60 years after the legal desegregation of schools, and 50 years after the first African/African Ancestry graduate from the State Normal School in San Jose to open opportunity to African/African Ancestry educators.

African/African Ancestry churches and social clubs took on the burden of inspiring and illuminating their children with excellence traditions rooted directly in the Free African Schools of the Atlantic coast. Readjusting the paradigm requires a profound shift from the current role of school systems to perpetuate white supremacy, as found by Stanford University Professor Emerita, Sylvia Wynter (2005).

As originally designed, schools for people of African/African Ancestry have been the training ground for the central force uniting American democracy. In Road to Ratification: How 27 States Faced the Most Challenging Issue in American History, a direct correlation is found to exist between the creation of the first school for African/African Ancestry students and the end of slavery in a given state in the nation (Templeton, 2014).

For California, such schools were created to prevent the spread of slavery, including the most important of the mid-19th century—in San Jose. Training educators in the tenets of African/ African ancestry education to serve humanity—alasal tarey—the term used by the people of the great West African Songhoy Empire, is a prerequisite for restoring the norm of African/African ancestry academic and cultural excellence. As a pedagogy practice, African/African ancestry educational excellence means valuing each person and each person’s unique history in daily classroom practice instead of either commodifying or simply erasing entire populations.

The Role of History in Education

The 2016 California History-Social Science Framework offers “students the opportunity to learn about the world and their place in it.” However, as Wynter noted in an analysis of the 1989 version, both the classroom materials and educators’ professional development fail to deliver for African/African Ancestry students. The first-grade framework is entitled, “The Child’s Place in Time and Space,” with teaching the child about themselves as the first objective.

In 2007, the California Council for the Social Studies commissioned an analysis of social science educators’ capacity to teach African/African ancestry history. Fewer than 20 percent of study participants could provide a culturally responsive lesson plan (Templeton, 2004). The failure to place African/African Ancestry children in time and space, beginning in kindergarten, is the direct cause of abnormal outcomes.

The Revolutionary Roots of African/African Ancestry Educational Practice

Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and Benjamin Franklin were among the founders of the African Free Schools in major East Coast cities in the 1700s. The seven New York City schools in lower Manhattan offered class sizes as large as 200, yet students were required to speak two languages fluently and play two instruments. Graduates of these schools were the founders of major African/African ancestry institutions such as churches, newspapers, and branches of the Underground Railroad.

Often projected as an emotional flight from oppression, when viewed through the narratives of these highly articulate operatives, the African/African ancestry freedom movement is a sophisticated international psycho-social intervention called by the National Park Service the “most important social movement of the 19th century” (National Underground Network to Freedom-https://www.nps.gov/places/crmnt.htm). The speeches and writing of African Free Schools alumni take the place of warships and armies to end slavery in the Caribbean by the 1820s and propel the United States towards the watershed moment of the Second American Revolution, the passage of the 13th Amendment.

A child like Peter Williams Cassey in Philadelphia would grow up in the home of a barber, Joseph Cassey, who used his resources to fund both African Free Schools and rescue operations of the enslaved. Peter Cassey’s mother was the daughter of Peter Williams, Jr., the first African/African Ancestry Episcopal priest in New York City and a graduate of African Free Schools. Williams organized St. Philips African Church in Manhattan in 1818 and founded the Phoenix Society in 1833. Peter Williams, Sr. was among the organizers of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1796.
By 1853, Peter Williams Cassey would arrive in San Jose, among a third generation of well-educated abolitionists extending the movement to a new front on the Pacific. The first African/African Ancestry Episcopal priest to be ordained West of the Mississippi River, he would help to establish a West Coast Underground Railroad, buying enslaved Africans and “helping them flee to Oregon and beyond.” Cassey was a founder of St. Philip’s Academy and Mission in San Jose in 1862, the region’s first school for children of color (http://www.stpetersacw.org/peter-williams-cassey/).

The African Roots of Public Education in California

The two iconic images for millions of Africans waging a battle against white supremacy in the Western Hemisphere were Abyssinia, which resisted colonization and slavery, and Haiti, which overthrew slavery. Haitians played a significant role in the end of European colonization in the Western Hemisphere. Haitian forces under the French flag, saved the American Revolution from superior British forces in Savannah and Yorktown, allowing the creation of the United States. After creating their own revolution to oust the French colonizers, they funded Simon Bolivar to lead revolutions in South America, which ended Spanish rule from Mexico to Argentina.

At that point, West Indian emancipation was a fait accompli for remaining British, French, Dutch and Danish holdings in the Caribbean. With the Caribbean controlling a third of international shipping, Africans in these islands would export freedom into the slave holding area of the United States. The pre-eminent Caribbean sailor was Captain William Alexander Leidesdorff, born in the Danish islands now known as the Virgin Islands. By 1828, Leidesdorff had travelled to New Orleans to operate as a cotton broker as the industry accelerated to meet the demand for manufactured clothes. By the mid-1830s, he acknowledged his African/African ancestry mother before his scheduled wedding with a white heiress, which caused the cancellation of the marriage. After a trip to New York City where his mentor J. D. Jones assigned him to captain his ship, Leidesdorff would sail to the Sandwich Islands in the Pacific where Jones was the consul.

In 1837, Leidesdorff began taking ship loads of Hawaiian sugar to the Mexican province of Alta California, landing in the pristine San Francisco Bay at the mission of Yerba Buena. By 1841, he would settle there and become a Mexican citizen as he built the first shipping warehouse, the first hotel and the first general store. Here, unlike Louisiana, he met other prominent African/African Ancestry men and women in leadership roles. Allen B. Light, another Caribbean sailor, was Comisario General of the otter trade, producing the furs which Leidesdorff brought back to Hawaii in return for sugar.

Jefe político Pio Pico led the secularization movement in this part of Mexico, which allowed private property ownership and opened Alta California to foreign trade. James Douglas was the manager of the Hudson Bay Company, which managed British interests in California. A rivalry with Pico, owner of 532,000 acres in southern California, helped fuel Leidesdorff to advance the interest of Alta California.

When Manuel Victoria was sent from Mexico City to oust Pico and other independence minded ranchers, Leidesdorff was granted Rancho Rio de Americano in the Sacramento Delta. His neighbor, John Folsom, would discover gold on his holdings. By then, Leidesdorff was designated sub-consul for Alta California under John Larkin in Monterey, the provincial capital, and became the first African/African ancestry diplomat. In that capacity, he hosted Lt. John C. Fremont who arrived from a mapping expedition for the U.S. Army. Another group of African/African Ancestry men, including John Grider, would participate in the Bear Flag Revolt in 1846, which captured Mexico’s General Mariano Vallejo. Leidesdorff wrote the report on the revolt for the U.S. State Department.

At the inception of the war between the United States and Mexico, Leidesdorff took out a $50,000 loan to pay for the provisions for the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marines in California. He would issue the proclamation declaring California part of the United States and host Commodore Stockton at his house at Montgomery and California Streets in San Francisco for the flag raising. In 1848, Leidesdorff would fund the construction of California’s first public school on his property near his hotel, dedicating it on April 3, 1848. Aware of the importance of mathematics, geography, navigation, and communication in his own career to overcome prejudice, Leidesdorff sought to ensure that the burgeoning community would have young people educated to operate in an interconnected world.

In addition to the Caribbean influence, the Abyssinian or Ethiopian empire also served as a point of inspiration to people of African/African Ancestry, who frequently named their new institutions Abyssinian, as in Abyssinia Baptist Church in New York City. The knowledge of the direct link from Palestine to the Ethiopian dynastic rulers was a cornerstone in the development of the Christian faith among people of African/African Ancestry. The Amharic alphabet rebutted the claims of a lack of culture and literacy among African/African ancestry people.

Churches, accordingly, played a significant role in the education of African/African Ancestry students in early California, particularly before the 13th Amendment. After the Gold Rush, African/African ancestry churches began forming in 1850 in Sacramento with African Methodist Episcopal, AME Zion or Baptist congregations in every settlement, including as many as ten in San Francisco alone.

Those churches would serve as homes to schools for African/African Ancestry children and Reverend Jeremiah B. Sanderson would serve as both the leader of numerous A.M.E. congregations and the founder of schools in the towns where these churches were established. The first Colored Convention of California in 1854 in San Francisco produced a report on education by the pastors of Union Bethel A.M.E. and First A.M.E. Zion, Reverends T.M.D. Ward and John Jamison Moore. The pastors wrote:

We are engaged in a great work; it is this, we aim to render ourselves equal with the most favored, not simply nominally equal, but truly and practically, in knowledge, energy, practical skill and enterprise. The past has been to us full of wrong and suffering; we are not content with our present condition; it remains for us to say whether we will continue in this position.

Under God, our dependence is in our children. As parents and guardians, we are under the most solemn obligations to have our children educated; upon any other conditions, our hopes and expectations of the future are vain. It cannot be denied, ignorance has been the cause, chiefly, of our sufferings. We must seize upon every opportunity to acquire knowledge, to educate the head, the hands, the heart, for the duties, necessities and
responsibilities of life. It is true the State should provide schools and instruction for our children, but she excludes colored children from her public schools. In one locality only in the State--San Francisco--a school is established for colored children, which is sustained by the liberality of that city's government.

The number of our children is rapidly increasing. In these circumstances, left to provide for ourselves, we must be all the more determined to do our duty--sacrifice something too of personal ease and comfort for the sake of giving your children schooling, wherever it is practicable. When our characters, as a people, shall fully combine the elements of learning, sound morality, and wealth, we shall be free and respected by all (1854 California Colored Convention Proceedings, coloredconventions.org).

Education for Freedom in Santa Clara County

By 1850, the syncretization of the strands of the abolition movement and California history would converge in San Jose with the first rescue of a fugitive slave on the West Coast. Peter Williams Cassey brought his grandfather’s January 1, 1808 Oration on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, which included this comment:

“Nor less to be prized are the useful exertions of Anthony Benezet. This inestimable person, sensible of the equality of mankind, rose superior to the illiberal opinions of the age; and, disallowing an inferiority in the African genius, established the first school to cultivate our understandings, and to better our condition. Thus, by enlightening the mind, and implanting the seeds of virtue, he banished, in a degree, the mists of prejudice; and laid the foundations of our future happiness. Let, therefore, a due sense of his meritorious actions, ever create in us, a deep reverence of his beloved name” (1854 California Colored Convention Proceedings).

The primary strategy of the international abolition movement in combination with the maroonage of armed resistance from the Haitian Revolution to the Seminole Wars in Florida was to point out the contradiction between the shift from monarchy to democracy and the continuance of slavery.

African Free Schools were designed to produce the orators, writers, and musicians to analyze the dissonance, articulate the difference between right and wrong, and sway opinion away from privilege. The majesty of their accomplishment is illuminated by the odds against success.

More than 100 million indigenous residents of the Western Hemisphere had died at the hands of Europeans wiping out entire civilizations. All international naval armament was in the control of European or American powers and the most modern industry for the manufacture of arms. The rulers of Europe were the metaphorical Pharaohs, unchecked by their appetites for empire. African people’s separation from the universities and vast libraries of the Songhoy Empire, which succeeded the Mali empire—that was home to Mansa Musa, the most affluent human in history due to his control of the Sahelian gold and salt trades—was the metaphorical Red Sea for the 75% of our ancestors who were kidnapped from that area of West Africa (Maiga, 2010).

That historical base of African/African Ancestry literacy, educational excellence, and artistic development would be the critical retention which allowed the most severely brutalized population introduced into the Western Hemisphere to respond with scholarship, clarity, and persuasiveness to assert their humanity.

Cassey knew the most revolutionary act he could mount in San Jose was to create a school for African/African Ancestry children. As the Colored Convention of California noted in 1854: “Ignorance has been the primary cause of our suffering.”

From the concentration of African/African ancestry political and economic power in 1846, when Leidesdorff had a 50% claim on the property of John Sutter to repay merchants’ debts and the land grants of the Picos that were guaranteed by treaty, California’s sanctuary for African/African ancestry affluence dramatically shifted with the American takeover.

A Southern dominated new legislature took away the right to testify in court and to vote from African/African Ancestry people, First Americans and Asian Americans. The Compromise of 1850 extended the reach of the Fugitive Slave Act to the West Coast. In the 19th century, patronage and control of African Free Schools shifted from white abolitionists to African/African ancestry churches and entrepreneurs. In a short time, the wealth of Leidesdorff was matched by the contingent of Caribbean and East coast African/African ancestry immigrants who arrived in the 1850s.

They responded to the exclusion of African/African Ancestry students from the schools begun by Leidesdorff by creating a colored school in the basement of Union Bethel A.M.E. in San Francisco in 1854. Jeremiah B. Sanderson founded the colored school in Sacramento in April 1855. There, in San Francisco and in Stockton, he was able to gain public funding for the schools.

At the state level, budgets in 1851 and 1853 allocated funds in proportion to the number of children in a particular town, but in 1855, it was changed to specifically refer to the number of white children—a direct challenge to the advocacy of the first Colored Convention of California. The election of Leland Stanford as Governor and John Swett as Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1862 would change those trends. Both were allies of Reverend Thomas Starr King, the pastor of First Unitarian Universalist Church in San Francisco and leader of the Unionist supporters in California.

Bostonian King would sway New England legislators to vote against their interests in maritime shipping for the Pacific Railroad Act and push President Abraham Lincoln to change positions and issue the Emancipation Proclamation the New Englanders favored. Governor Stanford signed legislation ending the ban of testify by African/African Ancestry people, First Americans and Asians in 1863 and in 1864, authorizing funding for schools for colored students.

Swett would report by 1864 six state-supported colored schools in San Francisco, Sacramento, Marysville, San Jose, Stockton, and Petaluma. They were insufficient for the 831 school-age African/African Ancestry children.

San Jose would become critical because of several convergences.

- The opening of the State Normal School in 1862.
- The establishment of the Phoenixian Institute as the first high school for African/African Ancestry students in the West in 1863.
The arrival of John Brown’s widow and daughters in Saratoga after being sheltered by African/African Ancestry people in Philadelphia after Brown’s execution.

Founding of First A.M.E. Zion Church in 1864 by John Williams, James Lodge, William Smith, and John Madden.

Cassey and other members of the State Executive Committee had attempted to establish the Livingstone Institute in the late 1850s in San Francisco as a secondary school. However, the Phoenician Institute in San Jose proved to be a more successful venture as a boarding school for African/African Ancestry students from across the state.

The Colored Convention of California in 1865 at its San Jose conference received the report: “The Chairman of the Committee, after reading the second resolution, stated that the Institute at San Jose, under the superintendence of Mr. F. W. Cassey, was in successful operation. The Principal was a gentleman of distinguished ability.” They resolved to ask the legislature to fund the school and assessed a $1 per person tax on each of the 4,086 African/African Ancestry residents of California to purchase the land of the Phoenician Institute property for $4,000. The name of the institute was derived from the Phoenix Mutual Aid Society created by Cassey’s grandfather in Philadelphia.

Given that education had liberated the race from slavery, the beneficiaries were even more determined to spread its benefits to their children. Even before the Civil War, abolitionist compatriots in Massachusetts had gained a state supreme court ruling banning school segregation in 1855. By 1866, the advocacy of African/African Ancestry parents caused the California legislature to pass a provision to the law requiring a Black school when there were as few as ten students of African Ancestry. That allowed these students to attend any school in instances where there were fewer than ten such scholars if a majority of parents signed a petition in favor of it. That was not enough, particularly after the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments in 1868 and 1870. By 1871, there were 21 African/African ancestry schools around California.

Caterer Jacob Overton and Sarah Overton became the local catalysts for the equal education movement in the 1880s. Overton organized the Garden City Women’s Club, part of the California Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, one of the driving forces for civil rights over the next century.

By 1890, Wysinger v. Cruickshank was decided by the California Supreme Court, striking down school segregation. By then, San Jose had three African/African Ancestry churches, with Antioch Baptist and First A.M.E. joining First A.M.E. Zion. Those congregations with the interlocking membership of the women’s clubs would continue to advocate for African/African Ancestry students. Ernest Johnson would become the first African/African Ancestry student at Stanford University in 1891 with the direct intervention of Jane Stanford, daughter of Leland Stanford. Johnson played football and was part of the first graduating class in 1895.

20th Century African/African Ancestry Education in Santa Clara County

Lucy Turner would be the first African/African Ancestry student to graduate from State Normal School, later to become San Jose State University in 1907. Her brother, Martin, was an actor who performed in films, including two that were screened in San Jose theaters in 1924 and 1934. In 1928, she was described as having returned to Texas to teach among the “colored people.”

Although public schools and colleges were integrated, teaching proved a barrier more durable than the major league baseball gentleman’s agreement. The election of Frederick Douglasses Roberts as California’s first African/African Ancestry legislator in 1918 led to his introduction of an act to ban racially biased materials in schools. The same year, the founding of the First A.M.E. Zion Church in Palo Alto at 819 Ramona Street led to interracial dialogues between people of African/African ancestry, Japanese, Chinese and European American groups through the 1920s and 1930s.


Plumber Bunny Ribbs added his entrepreneurial success to the dialogue about equal education in the 1920s. Ruffin also describes the Black consciousness class Minnie Darling taught in the 1920s in San Jose at Grant School in the Northside neighborhood. These classes happened in the context of the nationwide United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) led by the Honorable Marcus M. Garvey and the National Negro Congress led by A. Philip Randolph and Ralph Bunche.

San Jose participated in the statewide civil rights movement led by C. L. Dellsuns, regional vice president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Darling’s classes trained leaders in those movements.

Employment discrimination continued in California schools until the 1950s due to requirements of a year’s experience under a regular appointment before hiring. Inez Jackson, founder of the African-American Community Service Agency and namesake for its Black Resource Center, spent two decades attempting unsuccessfully to get a teaching job in Santa Clara County. She was also church clerk of Antioch Baptist Church for 20 years.

Pioneers included Eula Mae Brice, an elementary school teacher in Palo Alto who had grown up in the city’s schools, and Nettie G. Goddard. Goddard, who was the second African/African Ancestry public school teacher in Santa Clara Valley, would go on to be an administrator in community colleges and is now honored with a library at De Anza College (Carey, 2010).

According to the *San Jose Mercury News*, “They (Nettye and chemist husband George Goddard) settled in San Jose in 1955. She earned a master’s degree in education in 1973 from San Jose State University. She was chairwoman of the English department and developed the Black Studies and Human Relations programs for the San Jose Unified School District; she designed and managed the professional development center for the district and designed the multicultural program for the Stanford Institute in Cross Cultural Communication. Goddard ran workshops on the African/African ancestry experience at many local school districts’ and private schools.

Goddard graduated from high school in Alabama at age 13 and graduated from Talladega College in 1942. Before coming to San Jose, she lived with her husband on duty in Japan. Her husband spoke five languages including Japanese. Her first job was at Roosevelt Junior High School. Joyce Elmore became a parent liaison in the Franklin McKinney Elementary School District in the mid-1960s, being hired as a teacher in 1973 after gaining a degree and certificates from San Francisco State and the University of San Francisco. One of her high school students was Debra Watkins, the original Chair of this research study and current member of the Committee. Harold Jones began teaching in San Mateo County in 1963; he became an assistant principal in 1966 and moved to East Palo Alto schools as Principal in 1969 at Runnymede Elementary.
The arrival of the “Freedom Riders of the Cutting Edge”—Roy L. Clay Sr., Harry Reynolds, Gerald Anderson Lawson and Dr. Frank Greene—in the 1950s would make San Jose a magnet for talented college graduates from around the country. Clay was among the first African/African Ancestry students to attend an integrated Southern campus at St. Louis University in 1947. Arriving in 1958 to program the world’s fastest computer for nuclear simulations, he published his first technology journal article that year (Barber, 2006). By 1961, Clay was manager of Fortran and Cobol programming for Control Data in Palo Alto, creating the languages, which expanded the utility of computers.

Reynolds created the first African/African ancestry-owned tech firm, Reynolds Electronics, in East Palo Alto with other Tennessee State University graduates in 1965 to build high frequency synthesizers. Lawson joined Fairchild Semiconductor as manager of video engineering where he built the first cartridge video game console.

Greene, a semiconductor designer for Fairchild, developed the integrated circuit for the most advanced supercomputer. The St. Louis, Missouri native became assistant chair of electrical engineering at Stanford University and received a doctorate at Santa Clara University. He would leave to create the first publicly-traded African/African ancestry-run technology firm, Zero One, to operate supercomputers for sites like Ames Space Flight Center for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

At the same time, San Jose State College, the flagship of the California state college system, was transformed by Harry Edwards, when he arrived as a track and field transfer student from Fresno City College in 1960. Edwards insisted on graduating with a social work degree instead of physical education in 1964, after leading demonstrations against racism at the campus in 1963. Returning as a visiting professor in 1966, he organized the Olympic protest movement which culminated with the clenched-fist salute by John Carlos and Tommie Smith at the 1968 Mexico City Games.

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Tony Jackson, a football player from Oakland, who led the Black Athletes Coalition, led the team to boycott a game against Brigham Young University because of the Mormon church’s racial segregation. Ironically, Jackson’s mother and grandmother were practicing Mormons and an ancestor had been Brigham Young’s wagon train driver. Jackson would graduate from San Jose State University, get a master’s degree, and become the highest ranking African/African Ancestry officer at the time in the United States Marine Corps, retiring as commander of Camp Pendleton in southern California.

Affluence and more college graduates still left the African/African ancestry community shut out from decision making in education in Santa Clara County. As city councilman in Palo Alto, Clay became the first African/African Ancestry elected official in Santa Clara County in 1971.

Iola Williams, a native of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, would run for San Jose school board in 1976 before winning a seat on the city council in 1979. Henry Gage would be elected contemporaneously with Clay to the school board of East Side Union High School District. He would facilitate the hiring of teachers like Joyce Elmore.

Despite the concentration of well-educated professionals as parents, African/African Ancestry students faced poor outcomes, which countered the prevailing sentiment that poverty affected student performance. These patterns continue to this day, but local schools refuse to infuse the significant legacy of African/African ancestry educational excellence in Santa Clara County.

An Infusion Strategy

As demonstrated, Santa Clara County has direct links to the main narrative of American history through its educational history. African/African Ancestry students are unfairly demotivated and devalued at the very first stages of grade school learning because they are not provided their relationship to time and space.

The simple shift of describing African/African Ancestry people’s history as the successful campaign to defeat white supremacy, using the retention of African/African ancestry culture and excellence traditions, instead of an attempt to justify torture and kidnapping, empowers all learners to engage.

John W. Templeton has proposed the curriculum framework-compliant strategy of inquiry to encourage Santa Clara County’s school districts to engage learners of African/African ancestry and all students in the primary source research of the many untold aspects of each stage of African-American history locally. Through the California African-American Freedom Trail over the past 25 years, we have found that locally-based history is central to addressing the profound learning barriers which hamper students’ development.

These accounts of African/African ancestry history are much more likely to catch teachers and students off-guard, allowing them to take ownership of tearing down stereotypes. An example of such a practice would be to assign a group of students to re-enact the class experience of the Phoenixonian Institute, complete with dress, learning materials and biographies of the students.

The excitement witnessed at the opening of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, still fully booked after two years, or the billion-dollar film “Black Panther,” is generated organically as students find out how nine generations of their forebears navigated and overcame unfathomable obstacles.

Changing the timeline of history, as Black Studies theorist, Professor Sylvia Wynter, and anthropologist Asmerom Legesse advise, opens up academia to many more students. That is, when the issue of justness is no longer repressed to ignore the slaughter of 175,000 First Nations peoples who lived in pre-Gold Rush California, the learning environment is a much friendlier place for African/African Ancestry students.

The Singular Importance of a Sense of Belonging

Citizenship for All: 150th Anniversary of the 14th Amendment is a nationwide framework for inquiry into almost every participant in history through the prism of the student’s own personal history. Infusing figures such as Peter Cassey, Julia Brown (widow of John Brown), Lucy Turner, and Nettye Goddard into the curriculum and learning materials also offers the opportunity to design locally-specific learning challenges. The objective is to instill the sense of belonging first among educators, then among parents and students.
Ironically, Goddard’s specialty was to create the workshops, which taught teachers how to incorporate different cultures and languages. The experience of tracing the first African/African Ancestry educator hired during the 20th century during the preparation of this essay engaged dozens of people, without finding a definitive answer. We suggest that every school district and school in Santa Clara County ask the simple questions:

**Who was the first African/African Ancestry educator in the district/school?**

**When did the first African/African Ancestry students attend this school?**

Today’s students and educators are not getting the same advantages that Minnie Darling espoused as early as the 1920s. The domain of belonging is one of the variables measured by the State of California in its assessment process. Santa Clara County’s African/African ancestry population is surprisingly home-grown, particularly in an area with an influx of foreign-born workers over the past 20 years.

Historian Herbert Ruffin began his inquiry into the African/African ancestry experience in Santa Clara Valley as a child, growing up in Milpitas, where African/African ancestry union workers had relocated from Richmond, California to take jobs in the Ford automotive plant, now the Tesla factory. Without his personal insight, the concentration of people of African/African ancestry in Milpitas might have been totally overlooked. Additionally, the migration of Julia Brown to Saratoga is another aspect of history, which was obscured for more than a century.

There is a qualitative difference in the instruction of history for people of African/African ancestry as opposed to the typical way history is taught in American schools. Normally the classroom is structured by the environment, materials, and teaching styles to instill conformity and adherence to authority. History is the province of “great people,” meaning most students’ stories are never even explored.

Santa Clara County students never learn that the first Underground Railroad rescue in the West occurred in San Jose in 1850 or about the interrelationship between Peter Williams Cassey and the most prominent figures of the abolition movement on the East Coast. They also never learn that Dr. Mark Hannah was the innovator who created scientific workstations from his doctoral thesis at Stanford on the Geometry Engine and that he was co-founder of Silicon Graphics Inc.

Left out of their classes is the awareness of Dr. Robert Lawrence Thornton, leading inventor at Palo Alto Research Center, now known as PARC, a Xerox company, who gained 50 patents in photo-electronics for his lasers that are the driving force for laser printers, Blu-Ray, and many other industrial applications.

Another Santa Clara County technology leader missing from the curriculum is Silicon Valley Engineering Hall of Fame member Roy L. Clay, Sr., who came to Palo Alto the same year the African/African Ancestry women mathematicians featured in the film, “Hidden Figures,” computed the space flight for astronaut John Glenn. Clay was associated with the first big IPO, Tandem, and helped green light Intel and Compaq before launching his own company, Rod-L Electronics (Templeton, 2017).

A vignette from our research in preparing this essay is illuminative. We were referred to the official university historian at San Jose State University in our search for the first African/African Ancestry educator in Santa Clara County. The history professor was unaware of who the first African/African Ancestry student in the Normal School had been. Lucy Turner was decades before his educated guess.

Today’s students must first situate themselves as part of that African/African ancestry education excellence tradition as a prerequisite for achieving the heights of successful local graduates such as Olympian Debi Thomas or Associate Attorney General (now Uber general counsel) Tony West. Such knowledge will help African/African Ancestry students understand the institutional forces that kept Inez Jackson out of classrooms and that are still blocking access to the most lucrative careers in the global technology industry, rather than blaming themselves and losing hope. In African/African ancestry history, everyone is important because they have ten generations of ancestors behind them. To ensure that no child is left behind, no group’s story should be left untold.
Section 2

Academic and Cultural Excellence in African/African Ancestry Education Practice, Research, and Scholarship

The Education Assessment and Research Project was designed to capture the perspectives, experiences, and beliefs of community educators, African/African Ancestry teachers and educational leaders, early childhood professionals (Pre-K), parents and caregivers, and youth on the experiences of African/African Ancestry children (0-5) and students within Santa Clara County. The perspective of academic and cultural excellence as foundational to the social and emotional development and academic achievement of African/African ancestry children and youth guided the Education Assessment and Research Project. Academic and cultural excellence refers to children’s mastery of the curriculum, on the one hand, and knowledge of their heritage and sense of belonging, on the other.

Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III and Dr. Barbara A. Sizemore (NABSE, 1989) introduced the terminology of academic and cultural excellence into the academic literature as a way of conceptualizing African/African ancestry values and ideals in African/African ancestry educational excellence thirty years ago. This perspective or educational philosophy, which contrasts with the ideology of education for assimilation, is in alignment with the African/African ancestry excellence traditions just discussed and that are also articulated in the research, scholarship, philosophy, and practice of leading African/African Ancestry educators such as Carter G. Woodson, Fannie Coppin, Septima Clark, Mary McLeod Bethune, and W.E.B. DuBois, among others.

For example, Curry emphasized that DuBois recognized that:

“...education of Black people, specifically Black youth, must be deliberately geared not only to the preservation of Black history but also to the recognition of the inability of American-white-European political categories to adequately express the degree of political freedom necessary to deliver Black liberation. Ministry of our oppressors, instead of innovation and the pursuit of our own particular ideals would ultimately lead to the end of Black people” (Curry, 2015, pp. 45-46).

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Education Steering Committee articulated this African/African ancestry educational excellence perspective as a guiding framework for this investigation, which included a focus on:

1. Positive African/African ancestry parenting and community assets (including parents from different socio-economic statuses and community contexts).
3. Gender issues (educational and social challenges facing African/African Ancestry girls and boys).
5. Curriculum issues (design, content).
6. Community organizations, social service agencies, etc. (quality of services African/African ancestry children receive in various demographic and socio-economic settings; models of academic/cultural excellence that warrant recognition and support).
7. Community diversity: Bi-racial populations; African/Caribbean immigrants; religious diversity.

This section briefly discusses examples of research and scholarship on African/African ancestry education—Quality Early Childhood Education, Curriculum Transformation for Historical Consciousness and Belonging, Academic/Cultural Excellence Where Ever Our Children Are—informated by a culturally affirming perspective. “Energized by cultural consciousness” (Curry, 2015), racial identity and a sense of group belonging, research and scholarship grounded in this perspective contrasts with the White supremacist ideology that informs still prevalent cultural deficit theorizing in educational research and practice (i.e., “African/African Ancestry parents do not value education” and “African/African Ancestry students need to know how to play the game and fit in”). This education for assimilation ideological perspective is cloaked in seemingly pragmatic language that prioritizes “equal opportunity to get a job” rather than emphasizing the knowledge, skills, and communal ways of thinking and being that African/African Ancestry students need “in order to thrive as Blacks in America” rather than aspire to disappear into America’s mythical melting pot (Curry, 2015, p. 27).

This ongoing ideological debate in education, which is rooted in the history of race relations, settler colonialism, and the systemic oppression of various groups in U.S. society (Horne, 2018), continues to fuel the illusion of “transcending race” (e.g., “post-racial” America) but also skepticism about and palpable fear of African centered education, deep disdain rooted in ignorance about African/African ancestry language (e.g., African American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Black English) (LeMoine & Soto, 2016), and outright rejection of our African/African ancestry heritage and identity among many people of African/African Ancestry. These attitudes and beliefs may be increasingly prevalent among “successful” African/African Ancestry folks who aspire for themselves and their children above all else to be accepted as individuals, that is to say, to be “integrated” into the “whitewardly mobile” (Killian, 1994) middle-class mainstream or upper-class suburban affluence. Such opportunities for upward social mobility were possible for various other established groups that were initially not accepted as “white” (including Italians, Portuguese, etc.) in Santa Clara Valley and “model minority” South Asian immigrants. Attitudes and beliefs about whiteness and anti-Blackness, as well as lack of knowledge and mis-education regarding the excellence traditions of people of African/African Ancestry, here in the United States and on the continent of Africa, also animate the divide and exacerbate the uneasiness that often exists among diverse peoples of African/African Ancestry. Thus, curriculum transformation for infusion of historical consciousness and a sense of belonging has proven beneficial for students of African/African Ancestry at all levels of education.
Quality Early Childhood Education

Educators, neuroscientists, business leaders, politicians, and economists emphasize the importance of a child’s first five years on positive development into adulthood. Research indicates the benefits of high quality early childhood programming include healthy brain development, language, cognitive, visual, hearing and emotional development (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000; Center on the Developing Child, 2010). It is important to emphasize we are recommending the investment in and focus on quality early childhood programming for children. General consensus is that quality programs provide infants and pre-schoolers with educationally rich and responsive environments that enhances their language, social and cognitive development and is empirically linked to improving young children’s social and cognitive outcomes (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Minervino, 2014; Peisner-Feinberg, Burchinal, Clifford, Culkin, Howes, Kagan & Yazejian, 2001). For example, in a quality early childhood program the following are just the minimum requirements for educating young children:

- The program promotes positive, affirming relationships among all children and adults (e.g., Peisner-Feinberg & Burchinal, 1997).
- Culturally and developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching approaches are implemented (e.g., Hale, 2001).
- The education and success of children is informed by formal, informal and ongoing assessment approaches that capture children’s cultural knowledge, strengths and also areas of further growth and development (e.g., Ford, Harris, Tyson & Trotman, 2001).
- Children’s nutrition and health is promoted and they are protected from injury and illness (e.g., Dev, McBride, Fiese, Jones & Cho, 2013).
- The program consists of an educationally qualified, knowledgeable and professional teaching staff committed to promoting children’s learning and development (e.g., Durden, Escalante & Blitch, 2015).
- Collaborative relationships with families are established and maintained to foster children’s development in all settings (e.g., Iruka, Durden & Kennel, 2015).
- To achieve program goals the program builds upon and uses resources from the communities in which children live (e.g., González-Mena, 2009).
- Program leaders have high standards and expectations for staff and children by implementing effective and supportive leadership and program management (e.g., Muijs, Aboney, Harris & Briggs, 2004).

Ultimately, quality is defined, particularly for African/African Ancestry children, as an early childhood experience that promotes the cultural and academic excellence of young children (Boutte, 2008; Durden, 2007; Hilliard, 2006). For example, at the primary and secondary levels, this would include high quality, culturally responsive educators and leaders who implement a rigorous educational program that continues to meet the holistic needs of students and families (Hilliard, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2014). Children enter kindergarten with an affirming cultural and racial identity, prepared for ongoing academic rigor, and as an engaged lifelong learner. To sustain educational success, the schools into which these children articulate must also uphold the same standards of academic and cultural excellence. As the research discussed below indicates, curriculum transformation is an important and necessary element of quality education defined as academic and cultural excellence.

Curriculum Transformation for Historical Consciousness and Belonging

A recent study by Stanford University scholars Thomas Dee and Emily Penner (2017) documented the beneficial academic outcomes of an ethnic studies course that “aligns with the cultural experiences of minority students” students “at-risk of dropping out” of high school. The research documents that “struggling students” in San Francisco Unified School District who completed a high school ethnic studies course increased both their attendance (by 21 percentage points), their GPA’s by 1.4 grade points, and credits earned by 23. While California and other states, including Texas most recently, have adopted new ethnic studies course requirements in spite of the opposition claims that this curriculum approach is anti-American and teaches divisiveness (Brooke, 2017), ethnic studies proponents have given little or no attention to the specific academic and psychic needs of African/African Ancestry students, especially in hyper-minoritized /racialized school environments like much of Santa Clara County.

The predominant approach to multicultural education and ethnic studies curriculum transformation is to add the contributions and accomplishments of marginalized and excluded groups to create new ethnic studies courses (e.g., “Mexican American Studies” in Arizona and Texas). The aim is to make the American historical narrative more truthful and inclusive. Such additive approaches constitute an urgently needed corrective to curriculum bias. However, as Wade Nobles and Zetha Nobles point out: “The real crisis in Black education is a crisis of culture.” Therefore, academic and cultural excellence, that is to say, education for the sake of the humanity of African/African Ancestry students, requires a more culturally specific response to our predicament. What this requires is pedagogy (including curriculum intent and content) that “touches the spirit” or Nauda Sunsum (Nobles & Nobles, 2011).

Accordingly, Vera L. Nobles (2015) deepens this point by emphasizing the prime importance of language:

Language is a distinctive attribute of being human. The African tongues in the mouths of African Americans must be honored and respected as a fundamental aspect of being human and African in America. The recognition and respect for the way African Americans naturally speak—that is, Ebonics (also known as African American Vernacular English)—is an essential aspect of the African American cultural heritage and must be preserved and advanced. (p. 388)

As Joyce E. King observed in her 2015 presidential address to the American Educational Research Association: “People and scholars mistakenly believe that African Americans have no distinct cultural heritage intact as a foundation or excellence and resilience” (King, 2017b). Thus, the logic and language of the practice of African/African ancestry educational excellence, resilience, and resistance advanced from this scholarly perspective centers teaching and learning in culture and
heritage preservation through African/African ancestry language study. King and Maiga (2018) explained their approach to and rationale for teaching Songhay language and culture:

Enabling African ancestry students to identify with their African heritage by recovering group memory and historical consciousness through the study of Songhay civilization, culture and language has also provided opportunities for other learners (youth and adults) of diverse backgrounds to benefit as well. (p. 67)

The matter of the academic and psychic needs of “learners . . . of diverse backgrounds” in the Santa Clara County context, particularly in light of egregious racial incidents like the “Kill List” targeting African/African Ancestry students that was reported at a high school in Cupertino (Ramírez, 2017), also requires the urgent and concerted attention of researchers, practitioners, and curriculum policymakers to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment for African/African Ancestry students and for all students.

Another Stanford University scholar, Tomás Jiménez (2017), has studied immigrant assimilation in three distinct areas of Silicon Valley: Berryessa, Cupertino, and Palo Alto. In addition to language issues such as the fact that “established groups” found it frustrating that “their lives were impacted by people who don’t speak English,” Jiménez reports that in Cupertino, “whiteness” has been “turned on its head”:

In studying Cupertino, an upper middle-class, highly educated community with a large group of Asian immigrants, . . . it’s the white students, compared to Asian students, who’ve grown up in an immigrant household, who are associated with taking a lackadaisical approach to school and not working very hard. White kids say they feel the pain of assumptions about their intelligence from teachers and other students” (Martinovich, 2017, no page, emphasis added).

Might this “pain” that white students in Cupertino are feeling fuel hostility toward African/African Ancestry students? Would the racial climate as well as white students’ apparent fragility, as compared to Asian immigrants, be alleviated through an ethnic studies course that includes the ways in which Italians and Portuguese immigrants, who were initially unwelcome in Santa Clara Valley became “white”? Would white students’ engagement with school be impacted positively? What should Asian immigrant students learn not only about African/African ancestry traditions of excellence and struggle that made opportunities for them possible, but also about the trajectory of the American experience from “Coolies” to the “model minority” status of some Asian Americans today? It is also important to recognize the within group diversity among Asian American immigrant students, not all of whom are out-performing white students, as well as Hispanic/Latinx students (Pang, Han & Pang, 2011).

Indeed, would all students benefit from learning about the ways diverse groups have struggled together for civil liberties and human rights in California and the nation (Elison & Yogi, 2009)? Thus, undoing the dysconscious racism (King, 1991) that accepts the racial hierarchy as given, involves more than centering African/African Ancestry students in their own heritage for historical consciousness and belonging. African centered education is a foundation for the practice of African/African ancestry educational excellence and “re-membering” the history and development of U.S. society more truthfully (Horne, 2018; King & Swartz, 2014).

African/African Ancestry families are seeking the best venue in which to educate their children, wondering whether public schools, charter schools, parochial schools, independent African centered schools or home-schooling will provide the best educational opportunities. Researchers in the field of “urban education” as well as everyday people assume that conditions inside the home and the neighborhood—parent engagement, poverty, or other factors beyond the school—are most decisive. A new study found that African/African Ancestry youth between the age of 13 and 17 from affluent families (living in predominantly white neighborhoods) were more likely to suffer from depression and to experience racial discrimination than African/African ancestry youth from families with lower incomes. The distance these families have from other African/African ancestry communities could result in a lack of an emotional support group and mental health resources (Assari et al., 2018). Thus, suburban race-based trauma is a reality. Very young children, especially African/African Ancestry boys, are also exposed to racial bias. Both boys and girls of African/African Ancestry are viewed as older than they actually are and in need of less protection and nurturing but more discipline by their teachers, which is referred to as “adultification,” and they experience disparate treatment, including higher rates of suspensions and expulsions, even by pre-school teachers (Dancy, 2014; Epstein, Blake & González, 2017; Gilliam & Golan, 2006; Hathaway, 2016).

Researchers are investigating “How the Stress of Racism Affects Learning” and contributes to the achievement gap between African/African Ancestry and Hispanic and white students (Anderson, 2016). It is worth noting, however, that the gap between white and Asian students receives almost no attention (Hsien & Xie, 2014). Sociologist and professor of Black Studies at the City College of New York, R. L’Heureux Lewis-Mccoy recognizes that

“The crises plaguing most of our public school districts are the result of corporate-controlled state-sanctioned and federally-funded attacks to reverse Brown v. Board of Education and create a desuetude discrimination and educational apartheid that must be challenged and overturned. State governments are abdicating their civic responsibility of preparing all Black children for first-class citizenship . . . Black students [are] . . . graduating unprepared for college, career or community. These same students are sent out into the world, unprepared for the realities of a shrinking job market, increasing gentrification of the neighborhoods, and the high costs of higher education.”

The Movement for Black Lives Platform
https://policy.m4bl.org/community-control/

Academic and Cultural Excellence for Community Wellness—Wherever Our Children Are

https://policy.m4bl.org/community-control/
Thus, there are no straightforward, easy answers. While the data on whether charter schools are more academically effective is inconclusive, both the NAACP and the Movement for Black Lives issued a moratorium on charter schools, and scholarship continues to question the so-called success of charters in New Orleans (Buras & Sanders, 2018; Rizga, 2016b). Many African centered schools that began with a strong record of achievement have closed their doors. (Appendix I presents a list of African centered schools that remain in operation and in good standing.) What is most certain is that wherever our children are, the goal of academic and cultural excellence for community wellness, not only for individual advancement, will require communal attentiveness in order to use our culture—“the spirit and energy” of our people—and our communities’ heritage of assets or strengths. . .to bring about and maintain educational excellence (Nobles & Nobles, 2011, p. 8). Such a culturally consistent education process entails:

1. The belief that every African American child can learn everything and/or anything;
2. A process wherein knowing and knowledge are connected directly to the child;
3. Instructional techniques which are characterized by cooperation and mutuality;
4. The blending of individual achievement with collective advancement;
5. The desire to continually guide each child to the next higher level of functioning;
6. The underlying goal of personally contributing to one’s own as well as to everyone’s fulfillment;
7. Teaching and learning that are linked to the students’ and the community’s well-being and welfare; and
8. A process wherein cooperative effort is utilized to continually raise the standard of excellence (Nobles & Nobles, pp. 7-8).

Participants identified the school system (K-12 primary and secondary schools, community colleges, and universities) as another common locus of racism and discrimination. . .


Nov. 2017 - Mar. 2018

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Section 3
Research Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the educational experiences of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County, CA. Data for the study was collected using a variety of methods including individual, video-recorded and telephone interviews, online and in-person questionnaires, which were accessed by adults, including parents, students, and care givers and parents of young children (0-5), a community forum, focus group interviews/conversations with African/African Ancestry educators and African and Caribbean immigrants, and meetings with officials from Santa Clara County Schools and the Santa Clara County Office of Education, superintendents, current and former school board members, and the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Steering Committee. We also conferred with knowledgeable individuals and engaged several other scholars with relevant expertise as consultants. As the lead Researchers, we worked closely with the BLKC Steering Committee to design culturally sensitive research activities to collect information related to four domains of inquiry, which the Steering Committee identified: (a) the community’s definition of quality education and African/African Ancestry students’ access to quality education; (b) barriers in the education system for African/African Ancestry students experience; (c) policies that are hindering student success; and (d) impacts of discrimination and racism. In addition, community assets and best practice solutions and recommendations were also identified.

The Context

Statistical data that illustrates socio-economic realities in Santa Clara County are presented in Appendix C (Figures 1-4: Race & Ethnicity; Median Household Income by Race; On Food Stamps by Race). Statistical data from the California State Department of Education and Santa Clara County Office of Education Dashboard include academic performance indicators for African/African Ancestry students such as Smarter Balanced Assessments of student learning outcomes (2015-2017) by Race in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, which are below the required minimum standard (Appendix C, Figures 5-14). Figures 15-20 present 12th Grade Graduates Completing All Required Courses for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance (2018) in selected Santa Clara County School Districts (Eastside Union High School District, Milpitas Unified High School District, Palo Alto Unified High School District, San Jose Unified High School District, Santa Clara Unified High School District, and the Santa Clara County Office of Education). While the average GPA for African/African Ancestry students is 2.0 (reported in interviews with School District officials), only 4 of the students who completed the Online Youth Questionnaire reported their GPA is 2.0 or below.

Investigating the Educational Experiences of African/African Students in Santa Clara County: Using a Culturally Sensitive Research Approach

The research was conducted using Tillman’s (2002) Culturally Sensitive Research Framework: culturally congruent research methods, culturally specific knowledge, cultural resistance to theoretical dominance, culturally sensitive data interpretations, and culturally informed theory
and practice. Race and culture were viewed as central to collecting the data, analyzing the findings, and interpreting and understanding the perspectives of the participants. Race and culture also figured prominently in interpreting features of the community’s history and current conditions as well as how the education system functions adversely for African/African Ancestry students. Various forms of publicly available data (agency, county and state reports, etc.) as well as events and other information that were critical to the investigation were used in the research process. Whereas conventional research identifies participants as “informants,” the researchers invited the BLKC Steering Committee to use a community nomination process (Foster, 1994) to recruit and select participants, particularly for interviews. Individuals identified by community nomination were considered to be exceptional cases who could represent the community’s perspectives on the research topics and questions.

This research is culturally sensitive because it uses the cultural standpoints of both the research participants and the researchers as a framework for the research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation, as well as reporting back to the community (dissemination of the findings). With regard to the dissemination of the findings as part of the practice of research, this study is culturally sensitive given our explicit intention to use the inquiry process in addition to the findings in support of the efforts of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet to mobilize, build capacity for critical analysis, and thereby deepen the community’s consciousness, knowledge, and understanding of the role of race/racial identity, belonging, and culture/heritage knowledge in the liberation of African/African Ancestry people. Culturally sensitive research approaches recognize not only race and ethnicity, but also positions culture as central to the research process.

Key Features of the Culturally Sensitive Research Approach

- Culturally congruent qualitative methods were used in this education assessment to investigate and capture a holistic contextualized picture of community assets and the social, political, and economic factors that affect the everyday educational opportunities and experiences of African/African Ancestry students and educators in the Santa Clara County Schools.

- Culturally sensitive research approaches use the particular and unique self-defined experiences of individuals of African/African Ancestry. The researchers gained culturally specific knowledge from the interview participants by using community nomination to recruit and select individuals who would contribute their culturally specific knowledge to questions and issues regarding the educational experiences of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County.

- Culturally sensitive research approaches attempt to reveal, understand, and respond to unequal power relations that may minimize, marginalize, subjugate, or exclude the multiple realities and knowledge bases of African/African Ancestry individuals. For example, in this study we queried participants about structural issues and the types of institutional racism and discrimination that represent barriers to quality education for African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County. The research activities also permitted the investigation to focus on community strengths or assets.

- Using the experiential knowledge of the interviewees, Community Forum participants, educators, parents, students, and BLKC Steering Committee members allowed the researchers to analyze the data and present findings that are appropriate to the research topic and four domains of inquiry.

Individually and collectively the various components and key features of the Culturally Sensitive Research Approach represent epistemological and methodological possibilities that have the power to produce culturally informed research, theory, and practice that will benefit African/African Ancestry students, parents, community members, and others in Santa Clara County. This education assessment and research project is about “returning what we learn to the people” (King, 2017a).

Participants & Data Sources

Six hundred forty-nine adults and youth participated in the education assessment and research project, which included both quantitative and qualitative data collection activities. Figure 3.1, “Who Participated in the Research?” (below) shows the number of participants who completed online and in-person questionnaires, interviews, and focus group conversations. The volunteers whom the BLKC Steering Committee identified and recruited to participate in the Key Nominee Interviews included: administrators, current and former school board members, currently employed and retired educators at different levels of the system and in different age groups, including higher education and public health education, other community members, youth leaders, business owners, and parents (and grandparents). The Key Nominee Interview participants ranged in ages from 30+ to 50 and 60+ and consisted of 7 males and 20 females. “Education Assessment and Research Outreach Activities” in Appendix I. presents a detailed description of the recruitment strategies BLKC Steering Committee members used to identify and recruit the education assessment and research project participants.

The data sources used in the Quantitative Analysis included Adult, Parents, Parents of Young Children, and Youth Online Questionnaires (Qualtrics), an in-person survey administered to parents and caregivers of young children (aged 0-5), and a Community Forum Evaluation (Appendix D). The data sources used in the Qualitative Analysis, discussed below, included: 27 transcribed interviews, a transcribed list of recommendations generated by 43 participants at the Community Forum, BLKC Steering Committee open-ended questionnaires and discussion prompts, and individual responses from the open-ended questions at the end of each of the Online Questionnaires. In addition, video files of the Black Educators Focus Group Conversation (90 minutes) and an audio recording of the African/Caribbean Immigrant Focus Group Conversation (90 minutes) were also reviewed for the Qualitative Data Analysis.
As noted above, the collection and analysis of qualitative data explored and identified barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African Ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara’s education system. It also explored the way racism impacts the community’s academic success. These goals informed the Key Nominee Interview Protocol and open-ended questions at the end of each online questionnaire. Both were used to collect the qualitative data. This component of the education assessment and research project used a grounded theory coding approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to do “Traditional EcoVal Work” in ways that value community perspectives (Fournillier, 2018). The assessment and research project can therefore be described as including an organic, ecological discovery or a revealing of the question(s) through the data. This process allowed for interpretations that honored the various narratives of the many participants while making connections to the context of the assessment.

Grounded theory allowed for three phases of data analysis and the use of Code Memos. Throughout the data analysis process, we created various memos—short notes one writes to oneself during the data analysis process. We linked Code Memos to quotations and codes to allow for reflection on the data analysis process and to aid memory work in terms of what the data were saying and how elements of individual data sources were connected (See Appendix H, Figure 31, “Code Memos” for a sample memo).

Phase 1

Phase 1 entailed open coding of the entire data set. During this first phase, a close reading of the transcribed and textual data to identify, name, categorize, and describe phenomena in the text. A line by line, paragraph by paragraph close reading was done to answer the repeated questions: What is being discussed here? What is this about? What are the participants’ perceptions and experiences of quality education? How were they defining quality education? And what for the various individuals, depending on their age group and occupation, were the barriers to what they were defining as quality education for African/African Ancestry students in the county? In addition, what policies did they view as hindering student success? And, what from their perspectives were the impacts of racism and discrimination? What incidents were being referenced?

Close attention was paid to assigning labels to events, activities, ideas, solutions, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes presented during the interviews and in the documents. Many of the properties of the categories came from both the goals of the research as set forth in Section 1 and therefore the questions asked and the words of the participants who responded. Their individual interpretations of the questions asked and their experiences, given their age and occupation, were important considerations in creating the analytic categories. Therefore, if the interviewees were retired and no longer employed in the education system, the events described would relate more to their experiences many years ago or to those of their children and grandchildren. See Appendix H.

The Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation was designed and implemented by Dr. Janice B. Fournillier. Graduate student researcher, Natasha McClendon provided assistance. Other research consultants, Dr. Hassimi O. Maiga, Dr. Wade W. Nobles, Dr. Vera L. Nobles, Dr. Tiffany S. Russell, Dr. Cirecie A. West-Olatunji, and graduate student researcher Thais Council, assisted with parts of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, interpretation, and visualization.
Table 1 ("Selective Coding, Quality Education") for a visual representation of the initial categories and codes that emerged during open coding. The analysis of the qualitative data was an emic process, that is, the way participants/interviewees shaped the issues were coded. The words spoken and questions posed by the interviewees were not coded.

During the first phase of the analysis, Atlas Ti software allowed for the examination of word frequency counts, which was completed using all the code/categories. The categories/word frequencies were transformed into a cloud that related the size of the word to the frequency. The category that was most frequent then appears as the largest word in the cloud. See (Appendix H., Figure 32, “Open Coding Cloud Representation”) for a visual representation of the initial categories and codes created during the open coding phase.

Phase 2 and Phase 3

Phase 2 of the Qualitative Data Analysis process consisted of axial coding. Here is where the analysis began to look at relationships and examined more closely: What is the phenomenon? What are the contexts within which the actions and events took place and led up to the phenomenon? What are the intervening conditions and activities? What actions are the participants suggesting that need to take place in response to what is and has been taking place? And what do they seem to be suggesting might be or can be the consequences of the actions?

During Phase 3, selective coding was done. Five categories—Contexts, Barriers, Best Practices and Recommendations, and Quality Education became the containers for all the sub categories. This type of coding allowed for the development of a single-story line (but not a single story). We were now seeing that the contexts within which the research project was done and the activities and events participants described (that were taking place) were directly linked to the kinds of barriers like racism and discrimination that impacted African/African Ancestry students’ success and the quality of education they were receiving. There was an emphasis on the kinds of solutions, recommendations, and best practices that were being recommended if issues related to the phenomena of low achievement of African/African Ancestry students and racism and discrimination were to be confronted.

Ten figures and tables related to the coding processes are included in Appendix H. For example, axial coding in Phase 1 (Figure 33, “Axial Coding, Quality Education”) allowed for a fine tuning of the 136 open codes into 24 codes and selective coding under the category Quality Education. This made it possible to describe and interpret the findings as they related to: the community’s definition(s) of quality education, African/African Ancestry students access to the phenomena, and their suggested strategies. Some of these strategies overlapped and linked with the Best Practices and Recommendations category, as can be seen in Table 1, but were also associated with barriers. The category, Recommendations, an outcome of axial coding, was used to bring together the various concepts and codes from the open coding process associated the participants’ perspectives on the best solutions. Twenty-five percent of the total open codes came under this category in which best practices and recommendations were most grounded.

Findings from this investigation were limited by several factors. First, information from youth were limited to their responses to the online questionnaire and the Youth Panel at the Community Forum. The researchers did not conduct in-depth, individual interviews with this age-group. Nor did the researchers interview youth who participated in programs such as the Greene Scholars, Project WORD, Rites of Passage or Ascend (Alpha Phi Alpha), Images and Embodi (Delta Sigma Theta), or youth in Ujima Adult & Family Services activities. Future investigations would benefit from information from young people (and their parents) about their school experiences and out-of-school activities, such as their involvement in church, as well as a comprehensive inventory of other programs that are available to African/African Ancestry youth in Santa Clara County and how they result in positive outcomes for this group.

Second, while the researchers made a site visit to a daycare site, the research design did not include K-12 classrooms visits to observe teachers and students, nor were any curriculum materials examined or analyzed. Further, the researchers were only able to obtain a limited amount of information about the Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP) in each district.

Third, there were few respondents in the 18-24 age group to adult, parent, or parents of young children questionnaires. Future investigations and follow-up actions should target this age group as they are likely to have school-aged children, particularly pre-school children, about whom additional information would be helpful.

Finally, because African/African Ancestry residents in Santa Clara County are scattered across the County, and while the investigation yielded significant findings from the over 600 respondents in the targeted categories, a larger sample size would likely yield a wider range of responses on issues that are critical to the education of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County.
Section 4

Four Domains of Inquiry and Key Findings from the Assessment

Introduction

The Key Findings from the Education Assessment are presented in four Domains of Inquiry: (1) Community definition(s) of quality education, African/African Ancestry students’ access to quality education, and their suggested strategies; (2) Barriers in the education system that African/African Ancestry students are experiencing; (3) Policies that are hindering students’ success; and (4) Impacts of racism and discrimination. Best practice solutions and recommendations, a related core area of inquiry, are discussed in Section 5.

I. African/African Ancestry Community Members’ Definitions of Quality Education

Abstract

Community definition(s) of quality education and African/African Ancestry students’ access to quality education as well as their suggested strategies is the first of the four domains of inquiry that were investigated. The African/African Ancestry community in Santa Clara County is scattered among 32 school districts and 15 municipalities in Santa Clara Valley—from Palo Alto in the north to Gilroy in the south. Like other Bay Area cities, the number of African/African Ancestry residents is in decline as immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean are well-established. This diversity is represented among the participants in the research and includes individuals (the majority of participants) who have lived in Santa Clara County for more than twelve years. These individuals recall a different time when “the community” was thriving: it was more cohesive, more middle-class, and more involved communally in culturally nurturing activities.

Participants recounted that despite difficulties their children experienced in Santa Clara County Schools, many are now successful professionals in fields including engineering, teaching, social work, etc. Relatively newer residents are faced with the high cost of living and housing, in particular, with little or no connection to such shared experiences and traditions. One Key Nominee Interview participant stated that some people look down upon the students of lower-income families, who are seen as “destined for juvenile hall”. Similarly, others discussed the “haves” and “have-nots,” which reflects the reality of poverty and homelessness amidst the relative prosperity within the community. African and Caribbean immigrant families experience both harrowing racial incidents and the privilege of being different from people of African/African Ancestry, and some members of these communities are actively participating in Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet activities. In this context members of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet urgently embrace a vision of academic and cultural educational excellence that includes establishing an African centered school.

Essential Questions

- Do African/African Ancestry community members embrace a single story about quality education and community identity or do members of this community hold a range of definitions and beliefs about students’ access to quality education?
- Do adult and youth research participants share the same vision or understanding of education quality and access?
- Do “bi- or tri-racial” (a term educators use) students hold the same understanding of education quality as students who identify as African (Black)?

What Does the Education Assessment Tell Us?

Some members of the community hold assimilationist views. Others value cultural affirmation. These are differing responses to the cultural dislocation of mis-education and white supremacy racism.

While most of the participants agreed that students need to know about their heritage, some wonder how that might work given the “hodge-podge of cultures” in Santa Clara County where “everybody’s mixed with everything”. In addition to this way of thinking about being in the minority, some participants, including educators, fear being perceived as racist or self-segregating. Activist educators, nevertheless, described how they create culturally affirming academic programs that function as “safe havens” to provide quality education for African/African Ancestry students.

There are more “mixed-race” students in this community than students who identify with their African heritage and the former are less likely to want to attend a culturally nurturing Saturday school, afterschool program or an African centered school.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

The Online Adult Questionnaires, and interviews and Online Youth Questionnaires provide contrasting stories. More than half the students indicate they feel: protected from bullying and discrimination, for example, that their parents feel welcome at school, that their teachers care, and that they have learned about their heritage at school. Nearly all of the students’ responses to questions about slavery indicate that they have accurate knowledge (e.g., “Enslaved Africans contributed to the development of the United States.”). These indicators of a safe and supportive school experience contrast with the less sanguine responses of adults, including parents, in various data collection venues—interviews, group conversations, focus groups, and the Community Forum, as well as the online questionnaires. Parents and teachers recounted overtly racist traumatic situations experienced by even young children. One respondent wrote a lengthy statement that included an implied critique of African centered education, with a focus on the importance of getting students prepared for jobs. See Appendix F. for three responses to this statement by invited scholars who provided an African worldview perspective on African centered education.

The Key Nominee Interviews and the responses submitted by Online Questionnaire participants generally defined a “Quality Education” as one in which institutions, events, and activities are significantly associated with (1) community involvement; (2) culturally relevant teaching that pays close attention to exemplary programs that were in place over the years—many of which honored African/African ancestry cultural traditions; (3) attention to and knowledge of policies; (4) policy reformation to allow for the growth and development of the kinds of institutions and services that meet the needs of African/African Ancestry students; (5) parental engagement in various forms and not only attendance at PTA meetings; (6) attention to the role the home plays...
in the academic success of African/African Ancestry students; and (7) building relationships with parents and the community that included churches, sororities, fraternities, businesses, and other African/African Ancestry community groups.

**Community Definitions and Beliefs about Quality Education.** The individuals interviewed believe all of these activities could contribute to: creating the collective support necessary for the academic success and achievement of African/African Ancestry students, including (a) graduating high school, (b) going on to college, (c) becoming outstanding career-oriented individuals, and (d) developing a strong sense of self. The quality of education, for many participants, was also linked to the type of school, its curriculum content and implementation process, the goals of the institution, and the quality of the teachers. According to one educator/administrator at a private school, who is proud of the achievements of the African/African Ancestry male students he has taught over the years, the quality education these students received at this school contributed to their successful outcomes:

Frankly, if someone were to ask me where the guys are now or where they went to school, pretty much I know. We have had students that will go to Ivy League schools – Princeton, Yale, Harvard [and] Cornell. We’ve had students go to HBCUs – Morehouse, Howard, Hampton [and] Florida A & M. We’ve had students go to Big Ten schools – Michigan State [and] Wisconsin; PAC 12 schools – UCLA, USC, Stanford, UC Berkeley. You know, they’ve gone all over the place and our students have done some great things – doctors, lawyers, college professors, secondary school teachers, engineers – you name it. So, I would like to say I’ve had a hand in challenging guys who wanted to give up; encouraging mothers and families who, you know, were at a loss as to what to do with their sons. (Interview, Male Private School Educator)

It was no surprise, however, that in response to the interview question about how African/African Ancestry students are performing in Santa Clara County, many of the participants agreed that the students are not performing as well as the white students; instead participants stated African/African Ancestry students perform only slightly better than those with disabilities, and “they are achieving lower than the Latino kids in the county. Our kids are still having trouble . . . problems with their academics”. A retired educator described the situation this way:

It is dire. Even though we live in an affluent county – one of the most affluent in the country – our Black students in general perform like inner-city kids. (Interview, Retired Educator)

There was the widespread view that “it can be a struggle for a lot of the students to meet requirements . . . for graduation. . . at least for college; college entrance.” According to one participant, however, this is no different from what is happening nationally in districts that have large populations of African/African Ancestry students.

Still, participants expressed the belief that some things can be done to alleviate some of the challenges students face and this includes paying attention to the curriculum. As one participant, in response to the issue of students’ academic performance stated:

What are we doing with students to really get them engaged in the academic curriculum? Like, are the stories and the books that we’re reading . . . is this really something that the student is connected to? “You know, and just making sure that curriculum really takes into account, like, the experience of the student. And I think that it is hard. . .” (Interview, Program Administrator)

The Online Questionnaires and the Key Nominee Interview protocols asked participants specifically about curriculum matters and participants’ interest in African centered education (see Appendix E. and D.). Several parents and adults who completed the Online Questionnaires mentioned the importance of teaching African/African Ancestry students about their heritage in these two commentaries:

Our Afro American kids do need to be taught about their heritage in school. We need more black history classes so our kids can learn about their heritage. I bet they would do better in school and society. (Anonymous, Online Parent Questionnaire)

Establishing an African Centered framework, which considers the historical truth, beauty, and grace of [our] African heritage culture is mandatory. It should not be a responsibility of [a] concerned few, but it should be a responsibility of the whole society. (Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire)

Akua (2016) defines African centered education as the “process of centering students in the best of African culture to examine information, meet needs and solve problems in African communities” (p. xvi). African centered education, which has a long history in the field of Black education, as far back as W.E.B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson, is an outgrowth of Black Studies, though this term is a more recent interpretation of Black educational excellence. Moreover, it has been suggested that culture-centered instruction (in particular, African centered instruction) not only serves as an educational intervention against cultural discontinuity caused by ethnocentrism, miseducation, and curriculum bias in classrooms but is a psychological intervention (Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008). According to Nobles and Nobles (2018, Appendix F):

A major outcome of African centered education should be to prepare our children to be active participants anywhere on the stage of humanity and to have the capacity to deliver, create, incorporate, and influence human systems that are capable of connecting with community and devoted to the restoration of wellness for African American persons, families, and community.

In other words, African centered education emphasizes “more than just employability but preparation for their managing and mastering the future”.

The Key Nominee Interview participants were not always familiar with another instructional approach asked about in the interview, the concept of culturally relevant teaching. However, many described it (after a brief explanation) as the type of education they considered quality. Ladson-Billings (1994, p. 382) defined culturally relevant (or responsive) teaching as “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes”. Similarly, as Gay (2014) notes, culturally responsive teaching is an:
instructional technique [which] is based on the premise that underachievement of massive numbers of students or color is caused and perpetuated more by educational programs and practices that do not respect and reflect their cultures, perspectives, and experiences than their individual learning, interests, motivation, and abilities (p. 355).

Parents, administrators, and teachers’ descriptions of what for them is quality education included events, activities, and exemplary programs that honored African/African ancestry culture and used African/African Ancestry writers to create curriculum that allows students to see themselves. Included in other suggestions were: the importance of the community’s role in mentorship, support for the parents of African/African Ancestry students, and having a good working relationship with the students so that they are open to seeking advice and to learning how to support and be role models for each other. Additionally, interviewees expressed the belief that it is important to affirm the students and provide opportunities for celebration of their achievements.

The types of school settings in which interviewees reported that this quality education took place varied from independent, to private denominational, and home schools, including a small, private “Afrocentric” school.

I really advocate for the model of the small school setting: Afrocentric, that is, community-based, and that draws in the kids from the African-American community even if it’s through a church, because that’s usually the springboard for you know, schools and things like that. But I think the church could tag up and do a spinoff of a program that goes through the eighth grade or something like that. . . (Interview, Parent)

An Online Adult Questionnaire respondent offered a view of quality education that includes a “multicultural” emphasis.

Some of the challenges and problems that we enjoyed as a family seeking above average and outstanding educational supports for all African ancestry children were found in both the public and private sector school environments. I do think our children need exposure to both an African centered education and an environment that fosters life goals to survive in the social, technological, and multicultural environment that exists in Santa Clara County. (Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire)

Community problems and concerns about justice informed this adult Online Questionnaire participant’s view of quality education.

Santa Clara community schools are preparing students of African ancestry to succeed academically but not in life because the life outside of school is different. . .For example, lack of family support, discrimination, police actions towards them, where they live, etc.

Thus, the goals of the institution were perceived as also playing a role in creating quality education needed for student success. A private school educator/administrator pointed to institutional goals that seemed to have facilitated some measure of success in the academic achievements of his former students:

So, the first goal was academic excellence. Number two goal was and continues to be to promote cultural activities for the wider school community as well as learning Afrocentric cultural activities that support who we are; promote who we are; and demonstrate that we are a live, active group that has a proud history and a proud presence [that we] want to move forward, you know, in the days months and years to come. . .Thirdly, you just want to have a place where there is a safe haven. At least one day a week, we want for our students to come to a place where you know you’re not going to only be the one or two kids in the classroom; a place where you can come where you can let your guard down; you can relax; you can joke; you can encourage; you can challenge one another.

(Interview, Private School Educator)

Likewise, parents described how they have resorted to providing home schooling with a focus on academics to ensure that their children achieved higher scores, passed the required exit exams, and went on to college. The parents found a way to “play the system” to ensure that the children received a quality education that was not being given to them in either the private or public elementary school they attended. Participants in the interviews, Online Questionnaires, and Steering Committee Members identified numerous sponsored programs like Cultural Pursuit, Services to Youth, STEM SAT Program, Tutoring Math/Lang that were designed to benefit and support the quality education of African/African Ancestry students, programs that still exist and those that have been beneficial results but were no longer implemented.

Nobles and Nobles (2018, Appendix F.) observed in their comments on African-Centered Schools/Curricula:

While the immediate issues of educating to facilitate marketability in various high paying fields of employment; organizing the school day; hiring retired Black teachers; and partnering with HBCUs are important, they alone do not address the fundamental question of educating for humanity and the future.

A participant in the Online Parent Questionnaire shared similar views:

Santa Clara community schools are preparing students of African ancestry to succeed academically but not in life because the life outside of school is different first. For example, lack of family support, discrimination, police actions towards them, where they live etc.

In the interview, another parent remembered that in spite of the size of the private school her children attended, they were able to have access to the kind of education that validated who they are and their heritage and provided what for this interviewee was quality education:

Well, just based upon the sheer numbers, there are not very many African-American specific programs; just because, you know, the numbers don’t justify; . . .When two of my kids went to smaller private schools that . . .were more Afrocentric, they got that special, cultural sensitivity and stuff. Anything else that related . . .and they were . . .learned of specific African-American people that did certain things – inventors, engineers; folks that really made an impact in the African-American community. They were really, really good in history. They did a lot of history. They did field trips; museums and things like that—that...
were specific African-American museums; and inventors. Well, I think it gave them the cultural . . . cultural sensitivity things that they would not necessarily have gotten in a public school. Only because I grew up on the East Coast and that was just a part of life. I mean, you know, African American everything was there even though they were in a [racially] mixed setting. (Interview, Parent)

All of the educational activities and approaches participants described can contribute to creating the collective support necessary for the academic success and achievement of African/African Ancestry students. However, to achieve these goals hiring policies need to be amended and others put in place to ensure diversity in terms of the number of African/African Ancestry teachers and the development of quality education specifically for African/African Ancestry students. This point will be discussed in further detail below in Key Findings, Part III.

Data Analysis Summary

- There is no single story or definition of quality education or belief about students’ access to quality education. The various definitions of quality education range from one that is totally focused on achieving academic qualifications that allow for career goals to be achieved to one that is also culturally centered in African ideals, traditions, and history and allow for individual understanding and appreciation of self as a strong, valuable individual in society.
- In all of the instances the definitions and beliefs relate to community and parent involvement in the education process, and the valuing of African/African Ancestry educators, administrators and parents’ roles in the creation of a collective that benefits African/African Ancestry students’ academic, cultural, social, and psychological development and well-being.
- Finally, age, stage in career, educational and personal experiences, and status in the community play an integral part in the adult participants’ definitions and beliefs.

II. Barriers in the Education System

Considering African/African Ancestry Students’ Learning Styles

via a Cultural Lens Perspective

Being black does not mean that you are Christian. I would ask for events not to include just Christian prayer because if you continue to do so, you will be making minorities feel unwelcome and unrepresented. I say this as a Christian who witnessed discomfort on the faces of those who are not. (Anonymous Youth Online Questionnaire Participant)

Abstract

Participants in the Education Assessment identify barriers related to curriculum, instructional materials (including Common Core) and policy deficiencies, the need for systematic evaluation of the impacts of the many programs that are being implemented, culturally uninformed and insensitive classroom interactions with teachers and administrators that may contribute to harsh disciplinary action, as well as deficit views of educators toward parents. The lack of a cultural lens exacerbates these barriers. Another barrier for African/African Ancestry students is the absence of African/African Ancestry teachers and school leaders and a supportive community of people “who look like them encouraging them to be their best”. The broader community’s less than vigorous, organized, and sustained engagement on behalf of the well-being of African/African Ancestry students, especially those who are most vulnerable, was also cited as a barrier that needs to be addressed.

Although not explicitly mentioned by the participants, the political clout of the African/African Ancestry community would be strengthened by stronger collaboration among African descent immigrants and African/African Ancestry Americans, which is an opportunity for interaction and study of common and specific experiences. This is an especially opportune moment for such collaboration, given the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2014-2025). Participants called for more involvement of the churches (and diverse spiritual traditions of African/African Ancestry families) where students’ values, self-confidence, and cultural identity could be bolstered.

Essential Questions

- What barriers or assets do educators, parents, other adult participants, and youth perceive or identify related to parent engagement?
- Is the demographic profile of racial/ethnic groups in Santa Clara County a barrier to African/African Ancestry students’ success and well-being in any ways?
- What barriers exist for children and youth of different ages and genders?
- Is the type of school setting (public, private, charter, parochial, home school) a factor?
- How do participants suggest African/African Ancestry students, educators, and families can overcome any barriers they identify?

What Does the Education Assessment Tell Us?

In spite of the success of and continuing presence of exemplary programs like those mentioned in the previous section, the African/African Ancestry population is widely spread out in Santa Clara County and has changed over time. According to one Key Nominee Interview participant, a community activist and pastor:

There’s a lot of good stuff [going on]; it’s just not kind of sponsored by one unit; like a specific branch of the County of the . . . or any specific office. It’s usually a lot of non-profits or non-profit organizations doing different efforts throughout the County. (Interview, Community Activist/Pastor)

In addition, another interviewee mentioned changes in the population demographics that might contribute to the current situation for African/African Ancestry children and youth:

I don’t see that middle-class group of us that used to thrive in Santa Clara County. Most of those “middle-class” [people] have pretty much moved either back East or out of this area.
You see maybe pockets of it as you go North toward Hayward and Fremont and that area, but the pockets... those middle-class, I think they're dying out. Either you “have” or you don’t. (Interview, Parent)

Indeed, participants identified numerous barriers in the education system. During Phase 3 of the coding process, 34 of the 136 open codes found were related to barriers. Table 2, “Selective Coding: Barriers” in Appendix H. shows the range of factors that groups of participants associated with barriers to the academic success of African/African Ancestry students. However, the demographics of Santa Clara County were highlighted as a major barrier in the interviews and the open-ended online questionnaire responses. Not only are African/African Ancestry students and families “spread out,” but student numbers are not large in any one school. For one Online Questionnaire respondent, the problem is even deeper:

“The low numbers of African American students in the Santa Clara County Schools makes our students’ success, in my opinion, less relevant to the educators here today.”

(Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire, emphasis added).

Another commentary submitted by a parent who completed the Online Parent Questionnaire, which reflects the general tone of comments about teachers, explicitly described the lack of support students experience and the need, therefore, for African/African Ancestry teachers, as well as follow-up action:

When pushed and monitored teachers respond positively. This survey needs to be followed up on even if the desired number of respondents are not reached. NOTE: AA students are allowed to quietly fail as long as they are not a discipline problem. In other words, [they are] “used” for the ADA (average daily attendance funds) with ROI (Return on Investment) for the AA Student. Too many activities are delivered with no accountability in terms of measurements of their making a difference. Every year every student who is not progressing on track to graduate should have a mandatory meeting with the parent and a school official where this is openly discussed. (Anonymous, Online Parent Questionnaire)

In addition to this refrain in the online and interview responses, which indicated that there are Santa Clara County educators who not only fail to actively support African/African Ancestry students as learners, but also participants in the research implicated educators in passively or actively condoning harmful, racist school experiences. Such issues were also discussed by participants in the Black Educators Focus Group, the African/Caribbean Immigrant Focus Group Conversations, and the Community Forum. Another Online Adult Questionnaire commentary echoes these concerns:

All 3 of my children were raised in Santa Clara County. My grandchildren attend schools in Santa Clara County. They all have experienced horrific racist experiences in the schools here. The education they have received is inferior and does not prepare them to succeed. Schools criminalize them and treat them differently than other races. Something must be done to save our children. How can people who loathe our children teach them? (Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire)

From the perspective of those interviewed and online questionnaire participants, African/African Ancestry students who are often most in need of services to assist them were the ones most often not able to receive them.

These observations related not only to the issue of the numbers of African/African Ancestry students and demographics in Santa Clara County that have made it difficult to communicate with parents about the services available to them, but also to the lack of support from educators that African/African Ancestry students experienced. As a higher education counselor who was interviewed noted:

Because of the way this County is situated, we’re dispersed throughout the County. There’s not one geographic area you can go to and say, “This is where the majority of Black folks live.” We’re pretty evenly dispersed throughout the County and this is a big County. So, it’s hard sometimes to communicate...that there are these services available to them. (Interview, Higher Education Counselor)

Participants also suggested that the inability to access resources and services due to the demographics, allocation of funds in some areas and not others, and the lack of knowledge about where resources are available and who has them and or needs them are barriers that ultimately affect the ability of educators and administrators to meet the needs of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County.

But I get the impression just from grapevine and the classes that I teach at X College that there is still, you know, a large barrier to Africans and African-Americans having access to resources that could possibly improve their performance.

(Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire, emphasis added).

They are not getting the services they truly deserve, so I believe that they are not getting what they actually deserve and haven’t been for quite some time. (Interview, Business Owner)

In addition to having so few African/African Ancestry educators in Santa Clara County Schools, participants also perceived those educators who do not seem to have cultural competency as well as those whose curriculum and pedagogy lack cultural relevance as barriers. The view is that African/African Ancestry students then are not seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum and have little access to role models that look like them. As one parent stated:

So, having more people look like them, I think, is going to be very important; and having people to go into this field by any means necessary...And I think it’s just so valuable to see for African-American students to see that. I searched for them for my son. I couldn’t find an African-American male teacher at the second-grade level, the third level, you know? I found one at the first-grade level. (Interview, Parent and Business Owner)

Participants also expressed the belief that teachers’ lack of understanding of the students results in a poor attitude toward them, which contributes to larger numbers of suspensions and expulsions of African/African Ancestry students whom teachers perceive as un-disciplined and engaging in disruptive behavior. Interview and Online Questionnaire participants including parents and adults, some of whom identified as educators as well, are advocates for hiring African/African Ancestry educators who are more likely to understand the needs of African/African Ancestry students.
Ancestry educators and administrators who are trained in dealing with both academic and social issues and increased, intensive and on-going professional development. According to Wood, Harris III, and Howard (2018):

"There is a need to ensure that intensive, on-going professional development is provided to all educators (e.g., staff, teachers, administrators, counselors) on topics such as unconscious bias, racial micro-aggressions, culturally mediated behaviors, and teaching practices for boys and young men of color. All educators, whether full-time or part-time, should be exposed to these topics (p. 28)."

Likewise, in their nation-wide qualitative study of African/African Ancestry teachers Griffin and Tackie (2018) asserted that “as role models, parental figure, and advocates, they (Black teachers) can build relations with students of color that help those students feel connected to their schools” (p.1). Griffin and Tackie (2018) reported and our interviewees stated that African/African Ancestry teachers are able to connect with African/African Ancestry students in ways white teachers cannot. Where white teachers see “loud” and “disruptive” students, African/African Ancestry teachers are more inclined to listen to students to understand who they are and show less judgment.

One interviewee reported the he engaged in more conversations with students, rather than being quick to refer that student for discipline. Griffin and Tackie (2018) found that African/African Ancestry teachers take on multiple roles and “the pressure to be everything” can be taxing (p. 5) to their professional careers. This pressure might therefore account for the high turnover of African/ Ancestry teachers and might account for the African/African Ancestry teachers being “the first ones to leave”. In fact, the needs of African/African Ancestry educators must not be overlooked, as one respondent pointed out.

"You know, we do have a few newer Black educators that are helping, but most of them are not as involved . . . as we were back in the day, you know . . . So, there are very few Black educators, and I know they feel very unsupported. Oh, not [just] unsupported – isolated, you know, in these schools because they’re often the only ones, you know?" (Interview, African/African Ancestry Educator)

One Online Questionnaire respondent questioned the support education institutions are providing as well as the readiness of some African/African Ancestry educators to support students of African ancestry:

"Because of the low number of African ancestry children in SSC, programs and services are not funded to support them, even though they have the lowest academic performance in the county. There are very few black teachers and they are not comfortable working with black students and are not equipped to support them. They do not go out of their way for our children." (Anonymous, Parent Online Questionnaire)

This observation suggests an outcome of the Education Assessment and Research Project: a focus on the professional development needs of African/African Ancestry educators in Santa Clara County.

"Parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators, and counselors pointed to teachers’ lack of understanding of students’ learning style as contributing to negative attitudes toward and perceptions of African/African Ancestry students, who then find themselves the target of unfair disciplinary actions. The majority of the participants in the interviews and those who shared their experiences during the Community Forum all advocate for more African/African Ancestry teachers.

"I think most educators do not understand African American students and have preconceived negative attitudes towards our children which limits [their] availability to teach, inspire, motivate, and help them reach their full potential." (Anonymous, Online Parent Questionnaire)

One parent in describing an experience she had with a teacher who incorrectly labeled her child ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) without any medical examination stated:

"Because they don’t understand our kids; and they, you know . . . They generalize and they believe the stereotypes. And our kids are stereotyped, and they just . . . You know, they don’t expect much out of them because they believe what the media says about them; about our kids. So, they just overlook them or; you know, assume that they’re troublemakers." (Interview, Public Health Professional).

These perceptions are consistent with the research literature. For example, Wood, Harris III, and Howard (2018) reported: “The highest suspension disparity by grade level occurs in early childhood education (Grades K through 3) where Black boys are 5.6 times more likely to be suspended than state average” (p. 10). In addition, according to this report: “The highest suspension rates for Black males occur in rural counties that have smaller Black male populations.”

One grandparent in this study recounted troubling examples of how his teacher targeted her seven-year-old grandson.

"Now we’re dealing with that right now with my grandson, and we say . . . We say that he is kind of targeted. He’s in an all-white class, and he’s the only African-American in there. And he’s been suspended several times, and he’s also deemed as the problem child. And so, I think his race had a lot to do with him being labeled as the bad kid in the class." (Interview, Grandparent)

This is how this participant, who had been an effective and engaged parent, responded to the question regarding her grandson’s experience:

"Interviewer: ‘Would you say that white students are referred more for observable offenses like smoking, vandalism, other things; but Black kids like your grandson get referred for behavior that involves the teacher’s subjective judgments?’"

"Interviewee: Oh, absolutely. And it’s all subjective . . . just based upon what the teacher feels at the time. And he’s just gotta ride this one out and we have to move him next year, because he is not gonna thrive in that environment. He has already, you know, been labeled. So, it’s unfortunate that, instead of going the route of discipline, that they didn’t call the parents in earlier and say, ‘Okay, this is our plan. This . . . is how we’re gonna support your son.’ Instead, they suspended him; sent him to the office; make him sit in the office through lunch and recess and all that kind of stuff."
Although African/African Ancestry girls tended not to be the focus in most of the interviews, one participant pointed to an incident in which her daughter was misunderstood but was confident enough to report how she felt and what she was experiencing to the principal, who also happened to be of African/African Ancestry. Another participant using her own experience spoke to how she handled discipline problems using her understanding of the nuances.

But what you find in a lot of the schools where you have the Black teachers . . . First of all, there is less discipline [as a problem]. In many cases, we . . . Speaking as a Black teacher, I have . . . I used to own a set of my own discipline strategies. I incorporated my own discipline strategies in my classroom, and that’s what a lot of Black teachers do. That’s how they manage. Because, you know, you’ve been a Black teacher yourself; and so, you understand . . . You understand the nuances of connecting with people of color.

(Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire)

The State of California has responded to the call in the academic research literature for elimination of suspension in Early Childhood Education. Governor Jerry Brown signed legislation (Assembly Bill No. 752) last year “that bars state-subsidized preschool programs from expelling kids unless an exhaustive process aimed at supporting the child and family is followed first” (Romney, 2017). Wood, Harris III, and Howard (2018) state:

Suspending children in early childhood education can foster antipathy towards school environments, negative dispositions regarding students’ perceived sense of belonging in learning environments, confidence in their academic abilities, and perceptions of the utility of school. Moreover, these practices can also serve to erode students’ relationships with educators, a pattern that can worsen throughout their educational trajectories (p. 28).

Another interviewee shared this observation in her discussion of the suspension and expulsion issue:

That has changed now because they have taken all that out. The report cards . . . The disciplinary for report cards has been revised, so now they cannot send you to the office because you don’t have a pencil.

It is important to note that some responses highlight the lack of up-to-date knowledge of some participants who retired many years ago and either admitted they did not know or were responding based on their previous experiences.

It is also worth noting, in school settings where attention is paid to classroom equipment and furnishings that seem to be more in keeping with the learning style needs of some African/African Ancestry students, interviewees reported that there are fewer discipline problems and more attention is paid to teaching and meeting the needs of these students. In this next example, a former teacher described changes that she has observed in one district that are more in line with African/African Ancestry students’ learning style:

I do know in my school district they have tried . . . more of a theme-based type of program where they try to do things [in culturally-sensitive ways for] kids of color. I think it is a great thing for teaching reading and language; those kinds of skills. But more of that needs to be continued on through the formative years. I’m talking about fourth grade through sixth grade. I don’t see that enough because they go right back to you sitting in a chair, you know, memorizing stuff and, “Here is the test.” . . . I actually see different furniture in our middle schools. They have the stools, the paper where they can stand up. I have seen that. There’s more computers for the students . . . everybody has a Chromebook . . . And groups; everything is done as a team, Yes, that’s the kind of learning—our kids do better in that setting. I do see that more than I did when I was actually teaching.

(Interview, High School Teacher)

Parent and Family Engagement. Various points of view concerning barriers to African/African Ancestry students’ success with regard to the demographic profile of African/African ancestry residents and parent engagement can be found in this research. Many participants pointed to the economic context, which they associated with parents’ lower socio-economic status and by extension parents’ ability to be involved with their children’s learning or school activities in the way the education institutions organize it. Given the wide disparity in income and the high cost of living in the Santa Clara Valley communities, some African/African Ancestry parents need to work two to three jobs to meet their daily needs and support their children.

According to one interview participant, “You have to have $105,000 a year income. Otherwise, you’re considered impoverished”. This participant continued: “Many of our people that are on some kind of subsidy don’t make anywhere near $40,000 a year”. However, the Online Questionnaires did not identify parents’ working hours as a barrier. Nonetheless, Starr (2012) references the lack of diversity in the fast-growing tech field. Starr stated, “As the number of tech jobs increases, Black unemployment in Silicon Valley increases”. This theme was also found in the interviews, as a few stated that the lack of tech-related resources in the schools is confusing in light of their location in Silicon Valley. According to Starr (2012), “the schools seem to be disinverted to the tech boom in much the same way that blacks are missing from the jobs and opportunities”.

Another point of view that was expressed online and in other data collection venues, however, is that African/African Ancestry parents “are failing our African American children,” as this respondent asserted:

“The lack of support, lack of participation, over indulgence and lack of discipline have created children who aren’t willing to make the extra effort or go that extra mile for success.”

(Anonymous, Online Adult Questionnaire)

In fact, the situation African/African Ancestry children and families are experiencing in Santa Clara County is complex. There is no “single story.” Although some participants agreed that poverty and family structure are associated with the barriers that can contribute to the low achievement of African/African Ancestry students, others disagreed and in interviews referred to their personal experiences of having been in similar situations and were still able to overcome and to help their children to achieve academic success.

Only 2% of the Key Nominee Interview participants agreed with the (True/False) statement: “Black parents are not invested in their children's education and do not engage in school-affirming behaviors” (Appendix E, Key Nominee Interview Protocol). The majority (87.5%) disagreed with the statement. The notion that African/African Ancestry parents and families are generally not engaged or involved, that is to say, they don’t care, might simply be related to whether or not they
Attending school and community events and not their lack of investment in their children’s education. The are several findings related to this point. First, interview participants agree with the True/False statement: “A much higher percentage of white parents than Black parents attend PTA meetings and parent-teacher conferences.” In this instance 93.7% of the interview participants agreed and 6.2% disagreed with this statement. One can argue, however, that what parent engagement means is fluid and teachers’ perceptions of parents can also be considered as a barrier. Many of the interviewees and online questionnaire responses affirm parent engagement as a priority. However, as one educator who participated in the Key Nominee Interview stated clearly:

...schools want a particular kind of involvement from parents. They want the parent that comes to Back to School Night. They want the parent that, when the teacher contacts you, you make every attempt to fix whatever it is the teacher says is wrong. What they don’t want are the parents that come in and complain about teachers or complain about schedules or question your policy. So, they want parents on their terms. (Interview, High School Teacher)

Indeed, research shows that there are several models of parent and family engagement in schools. McDermott & Rothenberg (2000) found that Black and Latino parents expressed distrust of their local elementary school. While teachers were frustrated with the lack of parent involvement in literacy activities at home and at school, parents said they “deliberately decided not to participate in school activities.” They explained “they would only work with teachers who respected and valued their children” (p. 1).

Another barrier with regard to parent engagement examined in the parent engagement research literature is the “ghosts in the school and its community” (Edwards, 2016). This expression refers to parents’ previous (often negative) experiences with schools and these silent, often traumatic memories, can be overcome by creating a welcoming school environment and communications that are culturally sensitive. Concrete examples of how to achieve better home-school relations were an important theme of the Black Educators Focus Group Conversation.

This research project identified examples of community assets, or strengths related to parent and community engagement. Participants identified both past practice and ongoing examples, including the role of the church. Reflecting upon her children’s church and school experiences, this parent also mentioned the importance of African/African Ancestry young people having opportunities to come together at church, which is about more than religion but has also provided a nurturing respite from the hyper-racial isolation young people have experienced in Santa Clara County Schools.

And I think having cousins [and] having a church family made a big difference for them too, because they had other people that look like them that validated them. But then at the same time, they could be around white folks and still be okay and secure. (Interview, Parent)

Another interviewee cited four examples of ongoing community involvement with education and student success in Santa Clara County:

- There is an African-American person who works in the city office, and she does a does Black History Month breakfast with the City of Milpitas. She has all of the schools identify students . . . She has criterion like what they fall under, and it’s not just academics so that students are recognized for improvement, attendance improvement, or, you know; art or whatever it might be. And they have a speaker; and the mayor is there and the fire chief. And we go as a school.

- I’m part of the Alliance of Black Educators and they have an African American student recognition at the end of the school year. It’s held at San Jose State University, and these are sixth graders who are going on to middle school, eighth graders going to high school, and high school students going out into the world of college or the work force. And the students are recognized for academics. They are recognized for athleticism. They are recognized for band, religious connections, leadership, those kinds of things. And there were over 300 students recognized this year, and the ceremony is at San Jose State with pomp and circumstance.

- And then one of our Baptist churches in San Jose does a baccalaureate for 12th graders only, and they are recognized for graduating from high school and moving on to college and careers. So, it’s all positive. It’s all positive and it’s all awesome.

- We have 100 Black Men and 100 Black Women, and some of our sororities and fraternities are actually playing a role. We just need to be strength in numbers. We need to come out in force and not say, “Well, I got mine figured out. You figure out how you’re going to get yours.” The more voices that are out there, the more power that we have to make things happen. (Interview, Middle School Administrator)

Thus, findings in this report include that participants’ awareness that educators view African/ African Ancestry parents’ engagement with their children’s education from a culturally deficit perspective not via a positive cultural lens. A critique of this deficit perspective using a cultural lens, which acknowledges race and racism as factors in teachers’ deficit views, and which informed this Education Assessment, is supported by two important areas of scholarship that incorporate the knowledge and research of African/African Ancestry scholars. These areas of research, which are summarized in two commissioned essays, are culturally relevant parent engagement strategies, for young children in particular, and trauma-informed instruction/ intervention. (See Appendix B., Dr. Tonia Durden and Dr. Cirecie A. West-Olatunji).

While trauma-informed instruction, which was suggested in an interview with one African/ African Ancestry educator as a way to overcome some of the identified barriers, is becoming increasingly important as a focus for professional development and school-based intervention, the fact that these approaches fail to identify racism as a form of trauma, can result in such interventions actually creating barriers to meeting the needs of African/African Ancestry students (DeGruy, 2005; West-Olatunji, 2018). Expulsions and suspensions of young children, especially boys, can be linked to misdiagnosis and over-representation of these children in special education and pernicious labeling of children as “bad,” when educators are not adequately trained to recognize and respond to their more active and relational learning styles and behavioral responses to race-based trauma that African/African Ancestry children and youth may display. Research documents such racial bias
among pre-school teachers (Gilliam & Golan, 2006). Rather than focusing on “implicit bias” alone, however, attention should be given to dysconscious racism, which calls attention to the need to undo the mis-education of educators, that is, what educators learn and do not learn in their professional preparation programs about people of African ancestry (and their own heritage) (King, 1991; Meacham, 2000).

Although it was not mentioned by the participants, several African/African Ancestry scholars consulted for this Education Assessment and Research Project emphasized the urgency of promoting an understanding of the traumatic impacts of teachers’ negative views of African American language for student learning and development. Relatedly, an Online Parent Questionnaire participant mentioned the importance of language as a factor in the isolation African/African Ancestry elementary school students experience:

The demographics are rapidly changing in the Valley. Thus, our children are often isolated because few peers are English speaking and [they] use their primary languages during play and free time. As a minority and also different in color, some children are unable to positively navigate or understand their environment. The absence of engaged parents prevents them from knowing what is happening with their child. Teachers often appear uncomfortable or unable to address the issues they observe.

Schools and educators are challenged first to understand and then to respond effectively to the racialized trauma African/African Ancestry students experience in connection with widespread ignorance regarding many African/African Ancestry students’ spoken English (or Ebonics) as compared to “standard” academic English. As linguist V. L. Nobles and a host of other scholars have documented:

It is unfortunate that the children who speak Ebonics are those most vulnerable to the assault on their natural mother tongue. The greatest assault is in the area of public education, where children are promised that they will receive attention and skills that motivate and inspire them to be their best. However, it is in the school setting that African American children are made to feel that the way they naturally speak is evidence of their being less than human and intellectually inferior. Unfortunately, because of unaddressed racism in American society, African American students do not receive the types of assistance in their language development that groups from other linguistic backgrounds receive through English learners (EL) and limited English programs. (V.L. Nobles, 2015, p. 390)

In addition to teaching students about the African origins of African American Vernacular English (AAVE or Ebonics), a much-needed strategy is to teach African language(s), for the benefit of African/African Ancestry students’ historical consciousness and positive identification with their heritage, but also for educators’ professional development as well as the education of parents (King & Maiga, 2018; LeMoine & Soto, 2016). This issue is discussed further in Section 5, Best Practice Solutions and Recommendations.

Data Analysis Summary

- Participants identified numerous barriers such as: the number of African/African Ancestry educators, inability to access resources and services, and lack of cultural representation in the school curriculum and the K-12 institutions, and poor communication between groups. These barriers are closely linked to the demographics of the county, specifically, the change over the years, and the economic context.

- Respondents affirmed that African/African Ancestry students gain a sense of worth and are shown care beyond the classroom when they are taught by African/African Ancestry teachers.

- African/African Ancestry educators who have been the most active advocates for African/African ancestry students and who are retiring wonder and worry about who will carry on in their stead.

III. Policies That Hinder African/African Ancestry Student Success

I wish Ujima had an actual class at our school for credits."

(4 Online Youth Questionnaire Responses)

Abstract

Generally, respondents did not cite specific policies with respect to discipline, racism and discrimination, and other issues. Rather, in most cases respondents were unaware of specific policies and made general comments about the absence of policies that should or should not be used to address particular issues. However, responses indicate that parents, adults, parents of young children, and community forum participants felt strongly that there should be district and school policies that guide the interactions of teachers, administrators, and other school personnel with respect to African/African Ancestry students and parent and community engagement.

Essential Questions

- What do the data reveal about policies in Santa Clara County Schools that are hindering student success?

- What are respondents’ perspectives about school and district policies in Santa Clara County Schools?

- What types of information do policymakers need to foster success (academic and cultural excellence) for African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County Schools?

- What are best practice solutions that can effectively address school and district policies in Santa Clara County Schools?
What Does the Education Assessment Tell Us?

A priority should be given to expanding the conversation on how policy affects educating African/African Ancestry students. (Anonymous, Online questionnaire Parent respondent)

Although there are policies in place that could possibly contribute to African/African Ancestry students’ success, there seems from the perspective of the participants to be a disconnect. Thus, what should benefit the students’ success does not actually do so and is in fact a hindrance.

One major factor, according to one participant, that might contribute to this hindrance is the community’s lack of knowledge about education, what is happening in the district, and policies that might be applicable to curriculum design and implementation. According to one participant:

But you really need people that understand education; and what’s actually going on in the district; and education policy to help make some of the policy changes and get the programs running exactly how you want . . . Because I think a lot of times, how we were supporting the kids in school was, like, through mental health and through the County. And so, you’re getting more, like, counselors and psychologists and all that creating programs; and it lost some of the academic focus; like, the curriculum, you know . . . and really looking at how we’re going to impact, like, reading, and writing. . . Like, we did a lot of focus on the mental health work and how to look at that and address those needs, but we needed more of an academic focus.

This issue might relate directly to policies like the Common Core Curriculum that directly affects teachers’ ability to use a culturally relevant teaching approach since such content is not on the tests. And subsequently, teachers’ lack of training and inability to understand how to apply and or integrate culturally responsive pedagogy with the Common Core Standards make it more difficult for the students who continue to not identify with the curriculum content and the teaching styles of the educators, most of whom are not African/African Ancestry, given the statistics related to the number of African/African Ancestry teachers in the County.

Parents, educators, and administrators are therefore clamoring for an increase in hiring African/African Ancestry educators (and administrators) and a change in the recruitment and hiring policies. A frequently stated concern is that in Santa Clara County: “We lack African American teachers . . . African/African Ancestry students do not have role models as teachers and [these students] go through the County system without ever being taught by a Black teacher”.

(I Interview, Educator)

There was therefore a cry for massive recruitment as one participant stated:

I think we have to have a massive recruitment effort to get some Black teachers into the schools and let them be the ambassadors for the administration and the other teachers.

(I Interview, Retired University Professor)

Although there are district policies geared towards activities like restorative justice practices that can benefit African/African Ancestry students, there is still the issue of making the decision about whether or not it is worthwhile to spend the funds on this approach, given the small numbers and the greater interest in students’ academic performance. This policy to provide restorative justice instructors could alleviate the feelings of isolation and being pulled out from the group for services needed. However, it is still left up to the administrators, most of whom are not of African/African Ancestry, to make the decision about the necessity and the value of services to a small group.

Thus, there appears to be a direct correlation between funding, policies, and whether or not African/African Ancestry students, given their low numbers in each district, are able to benefit from the services aligned with the policies. For example, as beneficial as the LCAP policy program is intended to be for African/African Ancestry students, participants reported that LCAP has not been adequately implemented or supported by the engagement of the community. As a result, participants believe the needs of African/African Ancestry students continue to be unmet. It was felt that the community needed to be more involved in policy decisions as they relate to plans like LCAP. One interviewee was very clear that although such policies can contribute to the quality of education for all students, including African/African Ancestry students, the lack of community engagement is a deterrent. The interviewee stated:

The community is not going to LCAP meetings. . . And that is what they are supposed to be doing. The districts are supposed to be inviting the community to these meetings before they put these plans together, and no community people . . . not even . . . Social workers don’t go for foster youth. Nobody! Nobody is . . . Because they feel like they don’t have time.

(I Interview, Board Member)

Interviewees mentioned even more specific suggestions related to classroom practices and by extension to the quality of education African/African Ancestry students might receive:

I think that there needs to be a policy in reference to training the teachers so that they will respect all students; they will love all students; they will have compassion for all people and why that’s important. You know, that . . . So, it has to do with the training, and the training needs to be required.

(I Interview, Retired Educator)

According to this interviewee, implementation of policy related to classroom environment and school climate might impact the quality of education African/African Ancestry students receive.

In terms of a policy now, maybe with the classroom environment, that maybe you could have a policy regarding the school climate in the classrooms. . . and their school climate; classroom management where there should not be a difference in the way teachers are treating the . . . the ethnic groups differently. I mean all ethnic groups need to be treated fairly; justly, you know?

Other interview participants and online respondents suggested mandatory policies are needed for tutoring and for parent conferences when students are not making adequate progress.

However, to achieve the goals set by some schools who have had a measure of academic success, hiring policies need to be amended and others need to be put in place to ensure diversity in terms of the number of African/African Ancestry teachers in the classrooms and the administration.
and the development of quality education specifically for African/African Ancestry students in the County. A number of participants felt very strongly about policies related to hiring, as one educator indicated in the Key Nominee Interview:

I’m just going to speak to a personnel policy change that I think needs to happen in my district. We... And I’m talking about the recruitment of teachers and having teachers who can connect to the students. When we hire teachers and we have positions open, typically we have students that come from Santa Clara University who were student teachers with a master teacher for that year. And typically, they will hire that student teacher... when that opening happens. And then when we talked to [name withheld]: “Well, why aren’t we seeking out teachers of color? There are ways to do that.” Not a lot of us go to Santa Clara University. It’s not horrible... We are just making an assumption that this is the best fit without pursuing anything else. And I’ve asked if we could go to schools that have people in the teaching programs that look like the kids that we teach. I think that that, to me, is a huge issue. I’ve talked [about] that for the last 10 years at my school, and the response is... they are like, “Well, they’re not applying.” Well, you went to Canada and looked for Canadian teachers at one point, you know? Have you thought about going to an historically Black college fair or something and recruiting teachers? And that’s kind of like, “No.” They’re not going to do that.

(Interview, Educator)

The disconnect between policy intent and decisions regarding who should fund the implementation of policies that can benefit African/African Ancestry students then becomes a hindrance and ultimately adversely affects academic success.

Online Questionnaire respondents indicated that Santa Clara County Schools should implement and enforce policies that specifically address African/African ancestry students. Respondents indicated that it was especially important to implement policies in the following areas:

- **Discipline**. Fifty-nine percent of parents and 60% of adult respondents agree that “school discipline policies are administered unfairly in Santa Clara County” and that these policies are harming African/African Ancestry children and youth (See Figure 27, Appendix C.). More than half of the parents of young children agree that there are current policies in Santa Clara County that negatively affect early childhood education.

- **Parent Engagement**. Respondents overwhelmingly agree that the education of their children is a real priority for African/African Ancestry parents in Santa Clara County and specific policies and a model for parent engagement are needed in each district (See Figure 28, Appendix C.).

- **Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Promotion of African/African Ancestry Educators**. The majority of respondents agree that more African/African Ancestry educators are needed in Santa Clara County Schools. For example, 30% of parents indicate that their child/children had never had an African/African Ancestry teacher, while only 26% indicate that their child/children had been taught by at least one African/African Ancestry teacher. Further, almost 90% of the African/African Ancestry educators who responded to the questionnaire agreed that “the absence of African/African Ancestry adults (as teachers, administrators, parent volunteers, etc.) in the schooling experience of our children is harmful to them”.

Santa Clara County data reveal that in the 2016-2017 school year African/African Ancestry teachers represented 266 of the 13,317 teachers, 55 of the 1,055 administrators, and African/African Ancestry professionals represented 40 of the 1,365 pupil services personnel.

- **Racism and Discrimination**. The majority of adult respondents in all categories indicate that African/African Ancestry students are more often subjected to racism and discrimination and that there should be specific policies that address this issue (e.g., professional development of teachers and administrators). Parent education for advocacy in this area is also needed.

- **Curriculum**. California’s newly established high school graduation requirement for a course in Ethnic Studies (AB 2772) will require attention to curriculum development and teachers’ professional development in order to implement this new law (commencing in the 2023-24 school year). (https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2772)

**Data Analysis Summary**

- Participants listed lack of knowledge, Common Core standards, and the disconnect between written policies, funding, and implementation as a few of the glaring hindrances.

- While there are district policies geared towards activities like restorative justice practices that can benefit African/African Ancestry students, there is still the issue of making the decision about whether or not it is worthwhile to spend the funds, given the small numbers of African/African Ancestry students and the greater interest in focusing on their lagging academic performance.

- Simultaneously, changes made based on new policies seem to lack an academic focus.

**IV. Racism and Discrimination**

*Both overt and more subtle forms of racism and discrimination adversely affect students’ academic performance and well-being in Santa Clara County. Educators and families also experience traumatic impacts of racism and discrimination.*

**Abstract**

Racism and discrimination is the fourth domain of inquiry in the Santa Clara County educational assessment. This research sought to gain insight and to understand how and in what ways racism and discrimination impact the social, emotional, and academic achievement of students of African/African Ancestry in Santa Clara County Schools. Further, the inquiry sought to reveal in what ways the Santa Clara County Schools personnel engaged with parents, community members, social service agencies, and other entities to address incidences of racism and discrimination.
Essential Questions

- What do the data reveal about racism and discrimination in Santa Clara County Schools?
- What are the research participants’ perspectives about racism and discrimination in Santa Clara County Schools?
- What are some best practice solutions that can effectively address racism and discrimination in Santa Clara County Schools?

What Does the Education Assessment Tell Us?

We examined publicly available records on students’ academic performance as well as the various forms of data collected during the investigation. The data yielded four key themes relevant to how racism and discrimination function and affect students, educators, and families in Santa Clara County Schools.

Theme #1: Educators’ low expectations adversely affect African/African Ancestry students.

I think teacher expectations prevent[s] African/African ancestry students from reaching their full potential. The stereotype is that African/African ancestry kids are behavior problems, and it starts in third grade with African/African ancestry males especially.

(Anonymous, Adult Online Questionnaire)

- Eighty-one percent of parents, 70% of adults, 66% of parents of young children, and 20% of youth agree that teachers in the Santa Clara County Schools set low expectations for African/African Ancestry students (See Figure 24, Appendix C.).

Low expectations of African/African Ancestry students can have a cyclical effect. That is, when students are told overtly or when this message is conveyed in more subtle ways that teachers, administrators, and other school personnel do not expect them to do well socially and academically, they can internalize those expectations and may under-perform in the classroom or disengage from the teaching and learning process.

Theme #2: Curriculum issues are implicated in the under-achievement of African/African Ancestry students.

I have witnessed instances where students have changed their academic performance after being immersed in understanding their culture, regardless of identity. These experiences have led me to conclude that attitude, not aptitude influences performance. (Anonymous, Adult respondent to Online Questionnaire)

- Sixty-seven percent of parents, 93% of adults, 78% of parents of young children, and 63% of youth who responded to questionnaires indicated that it is important that African/African Ancestry students see themselves in the curriculum.

- African/African Ancestry students who see themselves, their history, and culture affirmed in the curriculum are more likely to feel confident in their ability to perform well academically and more likely to have a sense of belonging in schools where they are the minority of the student population.

- Only 49% of youth respondents agreed with the statement: “I have learned about my African/African ancestry heritage at school.”

- Nearly 70% of youth respondents indicated that they would “like to learn more about my history and culture at school.”

- Ninety-four percent of parents of young children, 93% of parents, and 93% of adults who responded to the online questionnaire agreed that education that affirms our children’s African identity and African heritage is important for their success in school and in life (See Figure 21, Appendix C.).

The absence of a curriculum that teaches about and affirms students’ African/African Ancestry identity, the small numbers of African/African Ancestry students, and the limited numbers of African/African Ancestry teachers, counselors, and administrators in Santa Clara County Schools suggest that these environments do not provide a space for students to form a collective identity that affirms their race, ethnicity, culture, and heritage.

Educators of African/African Ancestry and families are experiencing the harm that racism and discrimination inflict upon students. When we asked African/African Ancestry educators who participated in a Focus Group Conversation, “Are you black at work?” the participants reported that some African/African Ancestry educators are reluctant to advocate for our students for fear that their colleagues will accuse them of “being racist” (Black Educators Focus Group Conversation).

Parents who completed the Online Questionnaire indicated that they teach their children at home to correct what is being taught in school about students’ culture and heritage. Ninety-four percent of the parents of young children indicate that they teach their children at home to correct what their children are learning at school or in childcare.

Theme #3: African/African Ancestry students experience the absence of protection from racism and discrimination by school personnel (teachers, administrators, etc.).

An African male junior high school student was told by his European coach/teacher: “You better stay away from me” as the teacher wrapped a rope around his neck and held the end up like a noose. A European American history teacher, during his instruction, told the class that many Africans wanted to be slaves and chastised the African female student for questioning him. (BLKC Steering Committee Member in-person questionnaire response /published news report, Ramirez, 2017)

- Nearly 87% of adults and 77% of parents of young children agreed with the statement: “I am concerned that teachers and school officials do not protect my children from racial discrimination at school/child care” (See Figure 26, Appendix C.).
Santa Clara County Schools had several incidents of racism/racial discrimination during the 2017-2018 school year.

Theme #4: Santa Clara County Schools teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel need professional development to understand and respond effectively in culturally informed ways to the educational experiences of African/African Ancestry students and the impacts of racial trauma in their lives.

Faith seventy percent of the parents, 69% of the adults, and 94% of the parents of young children agreed that it is important for educators to understand "the specific academic experiences of boys and girls of African/African Ancestry," as well as the "traumatic experiences of African/African Ancestry students."

Ninety percent of adult respondents do not believe “Santa Clara County educators understand the ways that our children and youth learn best and then use the knowledge to provide effective instruction for African/African Ancestry students." Nearly all of the parents of young children agreed that pre-school teachers "need more training to meet the academic and cultural needs of our children."

School counselors as well as counselors who are trained to recognize and address trauma should be more attentive to the challenges faced by African/African Ancestry students.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

Discrimination and racism, the fourth Domain of Inquiry, was of utmost importance to this assessment. McGinley, Salako, and Dubov (2018) point to research that indicates that the schools and communities are not as safe a haven as they should be for children and particularly for marginalized populations like those in Santa Clara County (p. 163). Thus, according to West-Olatunji’s commissioned essay (2018, Appendix B.):

Integration of understanding as traumatic stress into the conceptualization of students’ schooling experiences—whether in predominately Black and urban or more affluent racially isolating suburban contexts—permits educators to aid in ameliorating this concern.

(p. 5)

Twenty-nine (29) of the one hundred and thirty-six (136) codes were categorized as associated with and linked to the category racism and discrimination (Appendix H., Figure 35, “Results of Axial Coding” and Table 5, “Selective Coding”). Racial disparities, barriers, and attitudes of teachers were also closely tied to this category that impacted student success and the quality of education African/African Ancestry students received. Although considered difficult sometimes to pinpoint, participants related stories of instances that reflected high levels of racism and discrimination. One participant responded thusly, to a question on possible barriers to African/African Ancestry students’ success by identifying racism as a factor:

Probably racism, but it’s gonna be kind of hard to pinpoint; but, you know, racism is alive and well now. It’s even starting at the national level, so it goes down; but that’s something that you know... it exists, but it... Oh, well, maybe it might not be hard to prove, because sometimes when you find out what policemen are doing...

Issues related to racism, therefore, are never talked about although it is right in front one’s face. One participant remarked that the low performance in itself is closely linked to racism and discrimination:

There are a couple of districts that have a larger number of Black students than others; and I don’t know if it’s a coincidence, but those are some of the lower-performing districts. Of course, they never talked about racism and, you know, why the disparities exist in our schools. And they certainly don’t address the lack of culturally relevant curriculum that often keeps our kids disengaged, you know, from schools. So they want to check off that they are doing something to further engage Black kids, and what they’re doing doesn’t work.

Parents and educators agreed that there are numerous instances of discrimination in the classroom. One educator stated clearly, for example:

But I think you know and I know that, even given the same performance in the class, Black students receive lower grades. That didn’t happen in my class, but it certainly happened in other classes my students took from my colleagues. (Interview, Educator)

Parents talked about having to confront teachers on their attitude:

Oh, let me tell you. Let me tell you. Look, so I work with the Alternative Schools. So, there was a principal — a Chinese man that was a principal in the Alternative Schools — and, you know, we get a lot of group home kids at our school. So, this one Black girl that was from Oakland, she was at the school. Well, the Mexican kids were messing with her and this other Black girl from Hunters Point. So, this girl, you know, got angry... But the Mexican girl started it, right? And so... But the teacher only got... the two Black girls, so, the Black girl is gonna get angry that they are always picking on them. (Interview, Alternative School Educator)

Indeed, this is one of the few times that Interview participants spoke directly to what African/African Ancestry female students experienced in the classroom and the challenges they faced.

Another Interview participant related an instance in which she confronted an administrator. She described the event:

You are discriminating against [name withheld] And the majority were women, and I said, “They are over 40 years old.” So, I told him... I said, “And they’ve been here 30, almost 40 years.” And I said, “So it’s discrimination.” So anyway, he told me to prove it and I got very upset that day. And I said, “Prove it?” I said, “Here is a list of women. They are at the age of retirement, and so there is a problem now with reclassification... You know, we were in that pool to be reclassified, but they were getting ready to retire. So, they were going to stick around to wait for that extra money, you know, for their retirement. I told them that, And so anyway, he told me to prove it or whatever. When I walked out that door, what did I tell him? I told him that everything is good except for... I told him something about if you
are not . . . If you are not gay and Hispanic, you don’t stand a chance at the COE. (Interview, Educator)

Having identified the problem for what it is, some participants have called for professional training in traumatic stress and restorative justice practices to assist teachers in dealing with the experiences of African/African Ancestry students in the classroom. However, racism and discrimination are not limited to the African/African Ancestry students but educators in the school system are affected as well.

Data Analysis Summary

- Discrimination and racism was a domain the participants most often associated with racial disparities, barriers, and attitudes of teachers.
- Instances of discrimination and racism were related to low academic performance, educators' experiences, confrontations between teachers and parents, and gender-specific experiences of African/African Ancestry students.
- Participants have called for professional training in traumatic stress and restorative justice practices to assist teachers in dealing with the experiences of African/African Ancestry students in the classroom.

“There is a need to ensure that intensive, on-going professional development is provided to all educators (e.g., staff, teachers, administrators, counselors) on topics such as unconscious bias, racial microaggressions, culturally mediated behaviors, and teaching practices for boys and young men of color. All educators, whether full-time or part-time, should be exposed to these topics.”

Get Out! Black Male Suspension in California Public Schools (Wood, Harris & Howard, 2018)

The Community Forum

On March 17, 2018 residents of Santa Clara County participated in a Community Forum at Maranatha Christian Center hosted by the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet. The researchers facilitated discussions about the education of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County Schools with 43 adults, youth, and members of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet. The Researchers prepared and distributed a “Fact Sheet” containing information/data about education and disparities in Santa Clara County (Appendix I, Community Forum Fact Sheet).

The Community Forum activities included “Fishbowl” conversations with adults and youth. During these conversations, as the audience members observed and listened, participants offered their perspectives about their own lives, their educational experiences, and their definitions of a quality education for African/African Ancestry students. Attendees also participated in small group discussions (Table Talk) about topics/issues they believed were important to the education of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County. Topics in each group ranged from parental engagement to curriculum issues to the recruitment and hiring of more African/African Ancestry educators. An analysis of the comments from each small discussion group yielded six major topics: parental and family engagement, support for students, community participation in the education of African/African Ancestry students, recruitment and hiring of African/African Ancestry educators, and district accountability for the education of African/African Ancestry students. Below is a summary of the comments on each topic.

Parent and Family Engagement

African/African Ancestry parents would benefit from:

- Parental support from teachers, administrators, counselors and the community;
- Opportunities for parent engagement in schools;
- A county-wide parent coalition;
- An African/African Ancestry parent advisory council in each school;
- Parent education and training; and
- Information about resources for their children and how to access them.

Support for Students

African/African Ancestry students need:

- Protection from racism and discrimination;
- Access to mentors;
- Opportunities to participate in programs such as Rites of Passage, Green Scholars, etc.;
- Presence of parents, mentors, and community members in schools to work with students;
- Opportunities to attend African centered school(s)/programs; and
- Counselors and trauma-informed counselors to work with students.

Community Participation

- Churches, mosques, and other religious organizations can/should sponsor after school and/or Saturday programs.
- Civic and social organizations can/should provide mentors, tutoring, and other enrichment programs.
- Committee is needed to investigate frequency and type of suspensions and expulsions.
- Committee is needed to investigate frequency and type of special education referrals.
- Networking with schools is needed.
- Working with African/African Ancestry parents is needed.

Recruitment, Hiring, Promotion, and Retention of African/African Ancestry Educators

- Increase the numbers of African/African Ancestry educators in Santa Clara County Schools.
- Place African/African Ancestry parents and community members on hiring committees.
District Accountability

Districts should:

- Be accountable to parents and the community regarding the education of African/African Ancestry students.
- Issue periodic accountability reports.
- Hold regular meetings/Listening Sessions with parents and the community.
- Establish a strategy for raising the achievement levels of African/African Ancestry students.
- Establish a strategy for recruiting, hiring, promoting, and retaining more African/African Ancestry teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel. This will require attention to the cost of living in this area.

Curriculum Concerns

- Include Black history and African Diaspora history in the curriculum.
- Establish an African centered school(s).

“I would love it if we did have our own school. That would be great if we could have a school... Just like we have in the health world... I work in health and we have, you know, clinics that are African-centered; and we have clinics that target Hispanics; and we have clinics that target the Asian population—you know, Vietnamese, and one over here targets, you know, Filipinos. It would be great to have something like that for our African-American students that really focuses on culture. I mean anybody could go to it, but it would be African centered.”

Interview, Public Health Professional

Section 5

Best Practice Solutions & Recommendations: Our Call to Action

There was no shortage of recommendations and suggestions of best practices that could ultimately lead to the development of quality education for African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County. Topping the list was the need for community involvement at various levels of the educational system and in the County’s school districts. In so doing, the collective approach needed to transcend the difficulties African/African Ancestry students (and educators) face in and out of the classroom would necessarily be created. Culturally relevant teaching, a pedagogical approach that was sometimes not known by name to the participants who participated in the Key Nominee Interview, was given high priority in the qualitative data findings as a definition of quality education. African centered education was also pointed out to define quality education.

This kind of teaching and curriculum involves exemplary programs, some of which participants identified, and which would focus on honoring African/African ancestry cultural excellence traditions (i.e., The Greene Scholars; Browder Scholars; Lantern Literacy Program; Project WORD). Participants suggested, for example, that African/African Ancestry writers/scholars should be included in the development of curricula for African/African Ancestry students. Such pedagogy and curriculum content, it is believed, would be possible solutions to the isolation that African/African Ancestry students face and would allow for the validation of who they are as members of a community in which they are a numerical minority.

It is important to note the skepticism that was expressed about culturally relevant pedagogy and African centered education. Several individuals who were interviewed repeated statements that seem to be part of the general tenor in the schools, such as: “The numbers do not justify” specific strategies for African/African Ancestry students. Or “Black students are in the minority in the classroom, so what about the Latinos (or Asians) who are in the majority?” Or “How are you going to do that when there are only one or two African/African Ancestry students in the class?” These reservations expressed by only a few of the participants may belie more widespread misconceptions about culturally relevant and African centered instruction. The assumption is that other students, in addition to African/African Ancestry students, will not also benefit from a curriculum of inclusion and belonging. The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet has an opportunity and a moral obligation to correct these misconceptions, which also ignore the harmful ways the hostile racial climate compromises the humanity of all students—but is especially damaging for the human dignity and self-confidence of African/African Ancestry students and educators, both of whom are isolated in Santa Clara County’s urban and suburban schools (Gordon, 1985; Kohli, 2018; Lewis-McCoy, 2018).

In addition to community involvement at all levels, the myriad of other best practice solutions that participants identified included: creating a collective among African/African Ancestry residents (including African and Caribbean immigrants), curriculum change and related sustained professional development, evaluating program impacts, and hiring policies that would increase African/African Ancestry teacher and administrator representation. A central premise of the Best Practice Solutions and Recommendations presented here is the importance of utilizing the research
knowledge base, scholarship, and best practices within the African/African Ancestry community.

Here is an example of a blueprint for a “Best Practice Solution” that is currently being implemented in the Rochester, New York School District in collaboration with Dr. Joy DeGruy, based on her now classic text, Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America’s Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing (2005).

The Relationship Model for Educational Intervention is a culturally specific approach for centering children of African heritage in their instructional program. Developed by Dr. Joy DeGruy, this model outlines and implements an authentic approach for engaging with and supporting students that is consistent with their lived experience and cultural heritage. DeGruy provides educators with a framework that defines and expresses the power of relationship to strengthen, motivate, and effectively connect educators with students and their families. This model accesses an African and Diasporan worldview that offers healthy and healing emotional and behavioral supports for students of color. It provides a foundation for creating safe, engaging school environments, instructional programs, and school policies that are student centering and culturally responsive. Students, families, and educators experience the Relationship Model as a transformative approach for building student engagement and strong learning communities.

The research-based culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogical approach developed by Dr. Noma LeMoine (LeMoine & Soto, 2016), former director of the Academic English Mastery Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District, also provides a professional development framework in Rochester, New York. Dr. LeMoine is a nationally recognized expert on issues of language and literacy acquisition and learning in African American and other Standard English learner populations.

Other Best Practice Solutions and Recommendations:

1. Organize a Think Tank and Community Study Groups with scholars, community-based historians and cultural preservationists, youth, retired/experienced African/African Ancestry educators, and community activists to develop a BLKC Community Education Syllabus and K-12 African centered, multi-disciplinary, project-based curricula that include the history of African/African Ancestry people in each Santa Clara County community, using local history resources (Adkins, 2012; Elinson & Yogi, 2009; Templeton, 2004). Appendix F presents a model for a Community Study Group workshop session.

Other Community Study Group topics might include: a) the challenges facing African/African Ancestry educators (Griffin & Tackie, 2016); b) African American language, teaching, and learning (Paris, 2009; Rickford et al., 2013); c) education reforms such as charter schools and home schooling (Mazama & Musumunu, 2016; Rizga, 2016b; Schneider, 2016); d) parent and family engagement in education (Brown, 2018; McDermott & Rothenberg, 2000) including parent involvement with what students are (or are not) learning (Thornton, 2016); e) policy development, such as local school finance accountability (Heilig, 2014) and alternatives to suspension and expulsion (Cole & Heilig, 2011); f) community definitions and standards for assessing quality education at all levels (NABSE, 1989); g) education strategies that provide a sense of belonging for all students; as well as h) employment opportunities and racial/ gender discrimination in the high tech sector (Templeton, 2017), and the African/ African ancestry economic independence tradition, including cooperative economic development and entrepreneurship (Nembhard, 2014, 2018; see also Appendix F). These questions posed by John W. Templeton (Section 1) are also a place to begin:

Who was the first African/African Ancestry educator in the district/school?

When did the first African/African Ancestry students attend this school?

Local community organizations and civic groups (e.g., sororities, fraternities, etc.) could be invited to partner with the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet as co-hosts of Community Study Group sessions. Such a series of community sessions could be promoted as part of the United Nations International Decade of People of African Descent, recorded, reported in newsletters, and posted online (podcasts, website links).

2. Engage young people in Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE) activities to assess the existing curriculum in all subject matter areas using a cultural lens to document local histories and produce African centered teaching and learning resources (suggested above) in collaboration with activist educators, parents, and other community members (Flores, 2008; King, 2018). Use the BLKC Community Education Syllabus and Curriculum produced with and by the community for teacher training, Community Study Groups, and to implement culturally-centered teaching and learning in Santa Clara County Schools in conjunction with California’s new Ethnic Studies requirement. If this community engaged, research-informed curriculum approach also explores interconnections and shared struggles among diverse groups (see below), bi- and tri-racial identified students may be able to locate themselves culturally and historically. Following are several best practice examples of youth and community-engaged research:

- Mariame Kaba and Essence McDowell’s (2018), Mapping a History of Black Women on Chicago’s South Side, provides a model approach to engaging youth in community-based research for cultural heritage preservation.

- Black Studies Professor and “Street Ethnographer,” Yasser Payne’s The People’s Report is a model for community engaged research and training community people to research and report on their lived experiences (Payne, 2013).

- The Youth Bucket Brigade, organized by the Newtown Florist Club in Gainesville, Georgia, offers a model youth leadership training approach grounded in community-based Youth Participatory Action Research.

- The Songhoy Princess Clubs, International, founded by Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Hassimi O. Maiga, is a blueprint for youth cultural heritage preservation and research, African language study, Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), social entrepreneurship for parent/family education, community healing, and curriculum development, including Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and
Mathematics—STEAM (Glass, Morton, King et al., 2018; King et al., 2014). The Songhoy Princess Club program was implemented in San Jose on Saturday mornings (January – May) at Bernal Middle School in 2016. The program was sponsored by A Black Education Network (A’BEN), and several bi-racial girls and a number of African/African Ancestry retirees participated as role models.

- Parent Voices Oakland (PVO), Clarissa Douthert, Executive Director, is a parent led grassroots organization that advocates for affordable, accessible quality child-care. “PVO organizes and empowers families with the highest need to build effective campaigns toward economic and educational justice”. www.pvoskland.org

3. Form a BLKC Curriculum Transformation Task Force. Curriculum transformation is an important opportunity for the African/African Ancestry community’s leadership in order to:

- Center African/African Ancestry students in their shared African heritage and excellence traditions in the U.S., the Caribbean, North and South America, and the African continent;
- Incorporate an accurate and truthful account of the experiences of Santa Clara County’s diverse populations; and
- Support the positive ethnic/racial identity development of all students, including bi- and tri-racial students.

The discipline of Black Studies (Africana Studies), which is the intellectual home and antecedent of African centered education, offers a theoretical, ethical, and pedagogical critique of curriculum bias and paradigm informed by the perspectives and experiences of diverse marginalized, excluded, and colonized groups, and justice-oriented whites (Karenga, 2005, p. 150). A K-12 Black Studies, anti-racism/ decolonizing curriculum approach would necessarily include Native American peoples’ history, their relationship to the land and with people of African ancestry (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015; Forbes, 1993; Horne, 2018; Miller et al., 2012; Parker, 2016); the African experience in the Caribbean, North and South America, including Canada and Mexico (Hernandez Cuevas, 2015; Reynolds, 2016); current realities of Afro-Latinos (Puerto Ricans, Cubans, etc.); social justice struggles among South Asians (e.g., the origins of Affirmative Action among the Dalits or “Untouchables” of India); movements for equity and justice among Filipinos, Pacific Islanders (e.g., the Pasifika/ Polynesian Panthers), and other Afro-Asian alliances as these diverse groups have interacted with and often have lived in close proximity with African/African ancestry communities in the U.S.; and Afro-Asian historians who have written about the origins of the civil rights movement, its effect on the global struggle for freedom, and the need for a more inclusive education that recognizes the contributions of people of African, Asian, and Native American ancestry to the history of the world.

In addition to deepening students’ knowledge and understanding of the African Diaspora, this curriculum should help students decipher inter-group tensions, as well as multi-racial/multi-ethnic collaborations in human and civil rights movements, particularly in California (e.g., the role of Bay Area Black workers in the anti-Apartheid movement, labor struggles in California, and the diverse student alliances that struggle together to establish Black Studies/Ethnic Studies in California universities).

A fundamental principle of this curriculum approach is: The story of African/African Ancestry people in the Diaspora does not start with slavery. African/African Ancestry students and families, including African and Caribbean immigrants, should have opportunities to learn about the shared history of peoples of African ancestry in the Diaspora and on the African continent—from the perspectives of African people. In this regard, African language study is critical (King, 1992; King & Maiga, 2018; Maiga, 2010; Wa Thiong’o, 2017).

Notwithstanding the anti-black racism (Afro-phobia) that exists within some immigrant communities, such “re-membered” history and recognition that “our roots run deep” can serve as an antidote to divide and conquer racial divisions (Templeton, 1991). “And we should not forget the impact of Apartheid practices in South Africa that took years to eradicate with the sustained efforts of Nelson and Winnie Mandela and other faith warriors” (BLKC Education Steering Committee member).

Finally, Parent Workshops to enable them to support their children’s learning are also highly recommended given the research-based evidence of parents mediating the adverse effects of racism and discrimination in schools by correcting what is taught (incorrectly or not taught) (Asante, 2017; King, 1992, King et al., 2014; Thornhill, 2006). This intervention is referred to in the research literature as “parental racial socialization” (Wang & Huguley, 2012).

The Best Practice exemplars presented here can also provide opportunities to partner with Black Studies and Teacher Education faculty and engage college and university students in for-credit community-based research experiences in collaboration with and using the knowledge and expertise of veteran African/African Ancestry educators—to update and adapt the historic model education advocacy and action exemplified by the Jeanes Teachers (King, 2016).

4. Provide consistent, long-term professional development for all educators, para-educators, and school site personnel (including front office staff). It is important that administrators implement a systemic approach to addressing racism and discrimination in schools—one that uncovers attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that can be harmful to African/African Ancestry students, families, and educators.

5. Implement specific policies that address the academic and social achievement of African/African Ancestry students. Policies should directly address the presence of racism and discrimination and how racism and discrimination can lead teachers and administrators to lower their expectations of African/African Ancestry students, fail to protect students from traumatic racial incidents, and view racist and discriminatory events as isolated rather than acknowledging the fact that racism and discrimination are systemic, structural, and part of the school culture.

6. Implement policies that ensure that African/African Ancestry students who have the required Grade Point Average (GPA) are encouraged to enroll in gifted and talented and advanced placement classes.

7. Re-evaluate discipline policies to determine under what circumstances they unfairly
disadvantage African/African Ancestry students. Determine if these students are more likely to be disciplined for minor infractions such as not bringing supplies to class, not turning in homework, chewing gum in class, negative verbal interactions with teachers, not following directions, and other infractions that could be addressed without causing students to miss class time. This problem is an opportunity for Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR).

8. Implement policies that ensure that African/African Ancestry students have access to information about career and technical/vocations, the range of careers available to them, the type of training needed for various types of jobs, opportunities for internships, and post-secondary education generally. Such policies should place an emphasis on the role of the school guidance counselor in helping students to make informed choices about what they will do after graduation, how they can access information about post-secondary education, vocational/technical training, and other factors that will impact their lives after they graduate from high school.

9. Convene Policymaker Listening Sessions with various groups to hear their perspectives on existing policies and the need for additional policies. These groups include parents, students, administrators, and other school personnel.

A wealth of data can be found on the state of State of California and Santa Clara County Office of Education websites /Dashboard. Appendix C presents various examples of the available data. The BLKC Steering Committee can review these data with policymakers and focus on issues/concerns noted in this report as they relate to students of African/African Ancestry (special education placements, suspensions and expulsions, poverty levels, free and reduced rates, number of students eligible to enter state colleges and universities, etc.). An analysis of this information can be used to determine what policies should be reviewed and revised and what new policies should be implemented.

10. Form a planning committee to establish an African centered school. To support this initiative, form a coalition of churches, community and civic organizations, and professional organizations to establish formal relationships and discuss combining their resources to operate an African centered school(s). An African centered school would help children to become both academically and culturally proficient, instill a sense of cultural pride in students, and provide a consistent safe space for meeting and engaging in same-race affiliation. An African centered school could operate as a full-time school and in addition offer programming as an after school and/or Saturday school. The planning committee should visit or contact existing African centered schools. The list of African centered Schools in Appendix I, Outreach, is a resource to identify proven best practices. There is also a substantial body of scholarship on African centered education.

11. Provide intensive training to all pre-school/early childhood caregivers. Such training should cover working with pre-school children (age groups, gender differences, appropriate instruction for each age group, classroom management, how to assess progress, working with parents, etc.). Provide training that is specific to teaching African/African Ancestry pre-school boys.

12. Design an evaluation component and implement community guided, culturally relevant evaluations to: assess teacher effectiveness (teaching strategies, classroom management, interactions with students and parents, etc.) and measure family engagement outcomes and beneficial impacts of programs serving African/African Ancestry children and youth. Engage youth and community members in these evaluation activities.

13. Initiate and maintain consistent communication and collegial relationships with African/African Ancestry pre-school children’s parents and caregivers. Allow parents to express their expectations, concerns, and suggestions regarding the education of their children.

14. Enhance communication strategies using multi-media and social media tools. Promote and evaluate the use of the BLKC website to inform the community about programs and activities supporting the education of African/African Ancestry children and youth.

15. Promote positive parental and family engagement. School officials should model policies, communication, and other behaviors that let students and their parents and family members know that the education of African American/African Ancestry students is a priority in Santa Clara County Schools. This would require that school administrators consistently communicate with parents and teachers about students’ progress, opportunities for growth, and how the school can and will help students to access the various opportunities that are available to them (gifted and advanced placement classes, eligibility for scholarships, etc.). Implement models of parental and family engagement that position African/African Ancestry parents as advocates, assets, and leaders not just helpers or chaperones.

Use Culturally Sensitive, Creative Methods of Data Presentation for Community Education and Mobilization

Various forms of data presentation are used in this report to present the findings from the Education Assessment (quotes, graphs and charts, narratives, infographics, and a web-based multi-media platform). There is a need to use the findings to educate and mobilize the community. This report includes examples of and resources to support innovative, culturally sensitive, creative methods to engage community members and educators with the outcomes of the research. Consistent with the aims of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Education Steering Committee it is recommended that opportunities are organized to allow community members, including youth, African and Caribbean immigrant families, to discuss their various points of view, and research-informed factual information. The example that follows is intended to illustrate the need to consider both what the research in this investigation as well as existing scholarship tells us.

Fact or Fiction? True or False? Interviewees were asked to respond “True” or “False” to statements such as: “There are more Black men in prison than in college.” Most of the interviewees responded, “True,” to this statement. The overwhelming number of “True” responses indicates that many African/African Ancestry individuals in the study—and perhaps in the community—believe there are more African/African Ancestry men in prison than there are in college. This statement is false. For over a decade, various reports and news articles have suggested there are more African/African Ancestry men in prison than in college (e.g., Justice Policy Institute, Cell Blocks Versus Classroom). According to Dr. Ivory Toldson, professor of counseling psychology at Howard University.
University and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Negro Education, cited in an article by Desmond-Harris (2015), this assertion is rarely founded in fact but is often a taken-for-granted sound bite based on outdated statistics.

Here are the facts. In 2011, the U.S. Census estimated that 6.3% of African/African Ancestry males attended colleges and universities, while 4.7% of African/African ancestry males were incarcerated. In 2013, the National Center for Educational Statistics reported that almost 1.5 million African/African Ancestry men were enrolled in some type of post-secondary education, while the Bureau of Justice National Prisoner Statistics Program (Zidenberg & Schraldi, 2011) reported that 745,000 African/African Ancestry men were in local, state, and federal prisons. While it is the case that men and boys of African/African Ancestry are over-represented in the criminal justice system, it is also the case that more African/African Ancestry males attend and graduate from a variety of types of post-secondary institutions, including 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, graduate schools, and for-profit schools.

According to Toldson and Morton (2011), “It is time to retire the line, ‘There are more Black men in jail than in college.’ Not only is this statement untrue today, it undermines strategies to prepare, recruit, and retain Black men in college” (p. 3). Further, as Toldson and Morton note:

the widespread and contentious notion that “there are more Black men in jail than in college” is not the fault of the Justice Policy Institute. Rather, it is the fault of journalists looking for a sound bite, politicians trying to arouse a crowd, program managers and researchers who would rather assert the need to exist than to demonstrate the efficacy of their techniques, and the list goes on of people who feel the need to be intentionally provocative. Lost in the feedback are young Black men who are trying to reconcile such an ominous conclusion with their reality (Toldson & Morton, 2011, p. 4).

The African/African Ancestry community needs opportunities to come together to discuss such issues and ways to assist African/African Ancestry males prepare for and access post-secondary education. It is also important to address factors that influence young people’s decisions to make negative choices that may lead to incarceration (Knapp et al., 2010). Of course, African/African Ancestry females also have specific education and developmental needs that should not be neglected, as both the findings of this investigation and the academic research indicate (Blake et al., 2017; Epstein, Blake & González, 2017).

Further Recommendations for the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Call to Action

First, community conversations are needed regarding the meaning of African centered education, changing demographic and economic realities, and racism and discrimination in Santa Clara County. The findings regarding various issues that have emerged in the investigation can be presented in ways that promote informed discussion. This research-as-pedagogy approach can be used in a series of popular education research briefs specifically prepared for insertion inside church bulletins, for example. Such community outreach is an example of sociologist John Stanfield’s Grassroots Marketing Strategy (Stanfield, 2012).

Also, as part of an information and action campaign, a series of “Did You Know?” flyers can be produced to disseminate the findings, educate community members, and with trained facilitators, prompt research-informed discussion in beauty salons and barbershops about the BLKC “Call to Action”. (See Church Bulletin Inserts, Appendix I, Outreach Resources.) Health promotion research demonstrates that salons and barbershops are prime venues for community education regarding health disparities (Linn et al., 2014).

Second, the empirical research findings that were integrated into several Key Nominee Interview questions can also be incorporated into such community education and discussion materials (Skiba & Williams, 2014; Skiba et al., 2002). Here are two examples of the questions that were posed (see Appendix E. for the Key Nominee Interview Protocol):

- How would you describe what is happening to Black girls? Research indicates that while Black boys are seen as threatening, Black girls are often seen as unsophisticated, hyper-sexualized, loud, unladylike, and defiant. Do educators in Santa Clara view Black girls this way and treat them accordingly? (Question 5)

- Studies indicate that African American and Latino students benefit tremendously when they attend schools with high concentrations of African-American or Latino teachers. They are less likely to be expelled or suspended; more likely to be recommended for gifted education; less likely to be misplaced in special education; and more likely to graduate high school in four years. Do you think African ancestry students in Santa Clara County are negatively affected in these ways because there are so few Black educators in Santa Clara County Schools? (Question 24)

Third, it is also important to engage young people in the discussion and dissemination of the research findings. For example, young people can dramatize the research dissemination process by performing the findings in skits using the method of Readers Theatre (West-Olatunji, 2005). Young people can be aided in translating the research findings into messages for their peers using poems and digital presentations. Appendix F. includes a model Readers Theatre script that was commissioned for this investigation to demonstrate the need for community members to discuss divergent points of view, in this case, differing ways of understanding what African centered education actually means. Educators can work with a team of young people to translate this script into a scenario they would find engaging.

Fourth, Appendix G. presents 18 original editorial/political cartoons, which were commissioned as part of this investigation and created by the artist Charles E. “Chuck” Siler. Why use editorial/political cartoons in research dissemination activities? Conversations supported by trained facilitators (youth, educators, elders) can be organized in various venues using the editorial/ political cartoons to illuminate and prompt community discussion about issues that emerged in the data (e.g., harmful classroom interactions, racial identity, racism and discrimination, what is taught in the curriculum, etc.). Editorial/political cartoon analysis is an accepted teaching tool that can include discussions as follows:

- What is the event or issue that inspired the cartoon?
- Are there any real people in the cartoon? Who is portrayed in the cartoon?
- Are there symbols in the cartoon? What are they and what do they represent?
- What is the cartoonist’s opinion about the topic portrayed in the cartoon?
- Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist’s opinion? Why?
Educators use editorial/political cartoons to initiate discussion, dialogue, debate, and journal and essay writing. How might these cartoons also be used as inserts with findings from this study and placed in church bulletins? A Did You Know? flyer can be created and used as the focal point of conversations in salons and barber shops to disseminate the findings of the research and to provide critical thinking tools for informed community conversations and debate. In this regard, culturally sensitive research methods also constitute a pedagogical process.

The African/African Ancestry community of Santa Clara County needs to mobilize for collaborative learning about the real meaning and value of African centered education as an essential, democratic component of community wellness in order to make informed choices about the present and the future.

Finally, education is and should be about more than “getting a job”. What about the responsibilities of citizenship, collective consciousness or Ubuntu (Humanity), the Zulu (African) philosophy: “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore, I am.” (Mbti, 1969)? To embrace and practice this philosophy educators need sustained professional development to gain accurate knowledge about and respect for African people’s long tradition of excellence and to counter the prevailing ideology of anti-blackness, or Afro-phobia, in education and society (King, 2017c, 2018). A culturally centered educational program can, in fact, benefit all students.

Conclusion

This report is the second part of the larger African/African Ancestry Demographic Study being conducted by the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet. This report of the Education Assessment and Research Project is intended to provide elected leaders, county agencies and community organizations, advocates, and residents with research-informed ideas, inspiration, and a vision of educational justice and excellence that is possible for the African/African ancestry community of Santa Clara County. With this report, the goal lays out a “road map” for developing a Call to Action and best practice solutions that will benefit African/African Ancestry young people and their families, especially those most in need of educational justice, as well as educators, and the broader community.

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Appendix A: BLKC Steering Committee
The Research Team

Tony Alexander: President & CEO of JW Consulting group. He is a former President San Jose Silicon Valley NAACP, and former Alum Rock union school district Trustee and Board President (1995-98). He was the Political Director & assistant to the President for United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 5, the largest private sector UFCW union in Northern California. He is an ALF Senior Fellow American Leadership Forum – Silicon Valley (ALF) is a network of regional leaders committed to serving the common good in Silicon Valley.

Leon Beauchman: President of the Santa Clara Alliance of Black Educators since 2002. He has worked with local districts and stakeholders to offer activities that support African American students. He served 15 years as a Trustee on the Santa Clara County Board of Education and six years in a similar position with the Campbell Union School District. Leon served on the Board of directors for the California Schools Boards Association. He held management positions with AT&T. He has an MBA and master’s Degree in Counseling Psychology.

Carolyn Charleston Johnson: Credentialed General and Special Education teacher w/ extensive experience in California Public Schools. San Jose State University Alumni. M.A. California State University – Los Angeles Administration and Supervision of Special Education Former Special Education Site Principal w/ Santa Clara County Office of Education – East Valley Center – Retired Director of Special Services for the Franklin-McKinley School District in San Jose, CA. BS. San Jose State University – Department of Special Education Field Supervisor w/ New Teacher Interns. Current Vice President - Santa Clara County Alliance of Black Educators

Kenisha Makan: Employed as a Health Education Specialist through the County of Santa Clara for the Black Infant Health program. Bachelor of Science in Biology from University of California, Riverside and Master of Public Health from Loma Linda University. Community volunteer, passionate about seeing the black community thrive.

Yvonne Maxwell: The eldest child of Wesley and Friedel Maxwell, mother and social worker, MSW, LCSW. One of the founding directors of the Adult and Family Services and Executive Director since it began in 1991. The agency provides African centered behavioral health and support services to children, families and adults. Lecturer in the School of Social Work at SJSU since 2001. DedICATIONS are the promotion and development of African centered services and the protection of and service to our African community. Co-Chair of this research project.

Sharon Ogbor: A youth and educational advocate. Sharon has spent over 25 years serving children and youth through non-profit health and educational organizations. She is the Vice President of Development for the newly merged organization between ALearn and Silicon Valley Education Foundation. Sharon serves on the Board of Directors for Miramonte Christian School and has served on the board of Child Care Resource Center in Southern California. She serves on the Education Committee for the East Palo Alto Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Brenda Smith-Ray: San Jose State University alumna, BS, MA, CCC, a Speech Pathologist, classroom teacher, principal/Vice Principal, Coordinator/Director of Special Education, Lecturer at San Jose State University and Santa Clara University. Served on numerous Boards; currently Board chair for C.A.R.L. Inc. and CEO of Della Productions. She Launched Courtland Esteem. Inc. as an Afro-centric school (1989), and the Santa Clara County Alliance of Black Educators, as President (1987-1991). She is Lead Co-Chair of this research project.

Debra Watkins: A high school English teacher, project coordinator, and counselor in the East Side Union High School District of San Jose for 35 years. She is a founding member of the Santa Clara County Alliance of Black Educators and served as its president from 1994-2001. In 2001, she founded the California Alliance of African American Educators (now called A Black Education Network) and an award-winning STEM program named after a Black scientist (Dr. Frank S. Greene) who helped pave the way for today’s computers.

Walter L. Wilson: Civil Rights activist, businesswoman, developer of business opportunities for diverse and underrepresented communities, program ignitor of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet, founder of African-American Internet Association, labored to produce the Roots Health Care Center, served as NAACP State Vice President, serves as project manager and Economic Development Officer of the African-American Cultural Center Project, and was a Hurricane Katrina Relief organizer. He has served on multiple Boards and received numerous awards for his work. He is Co-Chair of this research study.

Dr. Joyce E. King: holds the Benjamin E. Mays Endowed Chair for Urban Teaching, Learning and Leadership at Georgia State University, where she is Professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Affiliated Faculty in the Department of African American Studies. She received the Ph.D. in the Sociology of Education and a BA Degree in Sociology from Stanford University. A long-time resident of East Palo Alto, after teaching and working as a researcher at Stanford (with Dr. Wade Nobles), she served as Director of Teacher Education at Santa Clara University for twelve years. She then held positions in administration as Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Diversity Programs at the University of New Orleans; Associate Provost, Medgar Evers College (CUNY); and Provost at Spelman College. She served on the California Curriculum Commission during her tenure at Santa Clara. Dr. King’s research and publications focus on a transformative role for culture in curriculum, teacher effectiveness, morally engaged, community-mediated inquiry, and Black education research and policy. Her concept of “disconscious racism” continues to influence education research and practice and the sociology of race. Her scholarship appears in the Harvard Educational Review, the Journal of Negro Education, Qualitative Studies in Education, the Journal of African American History, and seven books including, Black Education: A Transformative Research and Action Agenda for the New Century (2005), and The Afrocentric Praxis of Teaching for Freedom: Connecting Culture to Learning (with E. Swartz, 2014). She led the Commission on Research in Black Education, a national and global investigation convened by the American Educational Research Association. At Georgia State she served as Principal Investigator of a Comparative Urban Partnership grant with researchers in South Africa and Brazil and as Co-Principal Investigator for a Collaborative Opportunity Grant, “Social Justice and Student Success at Georgia State,” funded by the Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU). Dr. King is president of the Board of Directors of the Food and Development Policy Institute (FoodFirst.org) in Oakland. She is also a member of the National African American Reparations Commission, and she was the 2014-2015 President of the American Educational Research Association.

Dr. Linda C. Tillman is Professor Emerita of Educational Leadership in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she taught courses in K-12 school leadership, central office leadership, and research design. A former public school educator with teaching and administrative experience, Dr. Tillman is a nationally recognized scholar and leader in higher education. Her research and scholarship is focused in three primary areas: school leadership, the education of all children and particularly African Americans in K-12 education, and culturally appropriate research approaches. Her concept of “culturally sensitive research approaches” continues to influence theory, research, and practice in the areas of teaching, leadership, and health care for African Americans as well as research in other areas. Her work has been featured in top tier educational leadership and research publications including the Educational Administration Quarterly, Journal of School Leadership, Educational Researcher, Review of Research in Education, and Review of Educational Research. She served as editor-in-chief of the SAGE Handbook of African American Education and co-editor of the Handbook of Research on Educational Leadership for Diversity and Equity (with J. Scheurich). Dr. Tillman was lead the evaluator for the American Educational Research Association’s Commission on Research in Black Education project. She is Managing Member of FAIRE Consulting Group LLC, a company which provides educational research.
parent training, cultural proficiency training, and other services related to equity, diversity, and excellence in K-12 and higher education. Dr. Tillman is an adjunct professor in the Department of Organization and Leadership at Teachers College—Columbia University.

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Appendix B: Commissioned Essays

Review of Literature

Casserian Engeri?

Promoting and Supporting Quality Early Childhood Educational Experiences for Black Children

Tonia Durden, PhD
Georgia State University

Introduction: And How Are the Children?

A traditional greeting among the great Maasai warriors in Africa is “Casserian Engeri” which means “And how are the children?” This greeting illustrates the value the Maasai people place on children’s well-being. So, how are Black children doing in America? Within the Santa Clara County and the San Francisco Bay area? As we ask this question, we must first understand where and by whom Black students are being educated. In 2012 President Barack Obama launched a new initiative called the Educational Excellence for African Americans, which accelerated efforts in improving the educational opportunities and quality of life of African Americans (United States Department of Education, 2014). This initiative outlines specific outcomes such as increasing the percentage of Black children with access to high quality teachers, programs, and schools at all levels of education and fostering positive family and community engagement in education. While this White House Initiative represents a federal level acknowledgement of the need to focus on excellence in education for Black students, we must continue to be diligent and steadfast at the state and local levels to advance the education and quality of life of Black students. So how is quality defined in early childhood and particularly for Black children?

Quality Early Childhood Education

General consensus is that quality programs provide infants and pre-schoolers with educationally rich and responsive environments that enhance their language, social, and cognitive development and is empirically linked to improving young children’s social and cognitive outcomes (Burchinal & Cryer, 2004; Minervino 2014; Peisner-Feinberg, Burchinal, Clifford, Culkin, Howes, Kagan & Yazejian, 2001). For example, in a quality early childhood program the following are just the minimum requirements for educating young children:

- The program promotes positive, affirming relationships among all children and adults (e.g., Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001).
- Culturally and developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching approaches are implemented (e.g., Hale, 2001).
- The education and success of children is informed by formal, informal, and ongoing assessment approaches that capture children’s cultural knowledge, strengths, and also areas of further growth and development (e.g., Ford, Harris, Tyson & Trotman, 2001).
- Children’s nutrition and health are promoted and they are protected from injury and illness (e.g., Dev, McBride, Fiese, Jones & Cho, 2013).
- The program consists of an educationally qualified, knowledgeable, and professional teaching staff committed to promoting children’s learning and development (e.g., Durden, Escalante & Blitch, 2015).


• To foster children’s development in all settings, collaborative relationships with families are established and maintained (e.g., Iruka, Durden & Kennel, 2015).
• To achieve program goals the program builds upon and uses resources from the communities in which children live (e.g., Gonzalez-Mena, 2009).
• Program leaders have high standards and expectations for staff and children by implementing effective and supportive leadership and program management (e.g., Muijs, Aburey, Harris & Briggs, 2004).

Ultimately, quality is defined, particularly for Black children, as an early childhood experience that promotes their cultural and academic excellence (Boute, 2008, 2015; Durden, 2007; Hilliard, 2006). Children enter Kindergarten with an affirming cultural and racial identity, prepared for ongoing academic rigor and as an engaged lifelong learner. An essential factor that contributes to children’s preschool readiness and educational success is of course high quality and culturally responsive teachers. Therefore, the ability and skills of our teacher workforce in drawing upon the cultural gifts, knowledge, and skills Black children bring to the classroom is fundamental to understanding the quality of experiences children are receiving.

Black Families and Early Childhood Education

In early childhood, families are the consumer and therefore families’ decisions greatly impact who comprises the early childhood workforce and thereby those who teach our children. As a result, the perceptions of Black parents on the quality of early childhood experiences of their children warrants a more in depth examination. The Household Survey provides insights on parents’ perception of early childhood education opportunities (OPRE, 2014). According to the Household Survey, compared to other households, 74% Black parents rated center based care high on educational preparedness and on nurturing environment (OPRE, 2014). Eighty-one percent (81%) of Black households felt relative or friend care was nurturing for their child and more likely than any other household (61%) to rate family day care as excellent or good for educational preparedness (OPRE, 2014).

It is important to understand the demographics of the teacher workforce in early childhood as we contextualize the perceptions of Black parents. For example, unlike the teaching demographics in elementary and secondary schools, which consist of approximately 83% White middle class, female teachers (U.S. Department of Education-NCES, 2013), the early childhood workforce is more diverse ranging from 5-35% of teachers who are Black, with the largest majority of Black teachers working in Head Start programs (Saluja, Early & Clifford, 2002). The ethnicity of the teacher and cultural connectivity between teacher and student has been shown to be one indicator of quality and higher achievement rates among Black students (Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010).

African Worldview

In establishing a standard of quality education for Black children, it is important to ensure that all instructional practices, experiences, and interactions with students are rooted within a culturally appropriate theoretical framework. The American school system represents a Eurocentric Worldview, but an African worldview represents a culturally appropriate theoretical framework for Black students. Worldview systems represent cultural realities that reflect the distinct approaches that Africans and African Americans utilize in organizing, conceptualizing, and experiencing reality (Hilliard, 2002). An African worldview emphasizes experiences and ways of living that focuses on spirituality, interdependence, harmony, movement, verve, affect, communalism, collective consciousness, expressive individualism, and oral tradition (Kambon, 2004).

An African Worldview identifies the shared sense of Blackness and cultural connectedness for those who have experienced historic and current attempts by their respective societies to obliterate African culture (Hilliard, 1995, 1998; Nobles, 1990). Specifically, people of African descent in the United States, have experienced massive economic and political forces of oppression (i.e. slavery, segregation, colonization, etc.) which inevitably has affected the socialization process, consciousness and culture of African people (Hilliard, 1995). In the early 1990s, Joyce King (1991) spoke out against the dysconscious racism within the American education system which mis-educates Black children by adopting curricula that creates cultural annihilation by starting Black history with slavery instead of starting with our rich African ancestral legacy of excellence and greatness. It is in the spirit of honoring the brilliance and resiliency of Black people we aim to “leave no school or educational system behind” in identifying specific pathways to educational success for Black students.

In practice, when schools adopt and consider such African-centric realities, the educational experiences match their high levels of expression, activity and learning styles, known in the literature and research as African-centered pedagogy (Azibo, 1996; Fukiau & Lukondo, 2000). For example, generally, Black children are exposed to home and community environments that encourage and support kinesthetic, and high levels of motor activity and exposes children to multi-liternaries (Hale, 2001). These multi-liternaries include Black children’s proclivity towards and talents in sensory focused engagement that is highly interactional and includes a unique cultural spirit and energy. As a result, Black students thrive in environments that use multimedia and multimodal teaching strategies (Durden, 2007).

Culturally Relevant Education

In the early 1990s, scholar Ladson-Billings coined the term culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) to describe a pedagogical approach used by successful teachers of African American students. This term has been more widely used and mainstreamed within our educational system than African centered pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (1994) defined culturally relevant teaching as, “pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (pp. 17-18). Looking through the lens of the child requires teachers to implement curriculum and instructional practices that are culturally sensitive and relative to the child’s experience. To be culturally responsive, teachers and early care programs must first believe that all students can succeed, maintain an affirming student-teacher relationship, and see excellence as a complex standard that accounts for student diversity and individual difference (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) connects classroom learning to children’s home experiences and native languages. This cultural understanding of students (family traditions, customs, etc.) alone, however, is not sufficient. Culturally relevant teachers help students make connections between students’ community, national, and global identities and the socio-political constructs that influence these identities (Paris, 2012). CRP also encourages children to work...
collaboratively and expects them to teach and take responsibility for each other (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014). In summary, culturally relevant teaching draws upon the cultural knowledge, skills, and talents that young children bring with them from home (Gonzalez-Mena, 2009; LadsonBillings, 2014). When teachers focus on teaching children based on their uniqueness and where they come from, teachers then begin to:

- Intentionally encourage all children to be contributing members within the classroom community;
- Build young children’s self-confidence and skills;
- Promote the development of inclusive peer groups and friendships (age, gender, special needs); and
- Become more aware of how to distinguish between a cultural and language difference and a learning or behavioral special need.

As we reflect on the education of Black children, it is therefore incumbent that we ensure CRP not only adheres to the successful pedagogical strategies teachers must teach, but also raises the socio-political consciousness of both the teacher and student. When reflecting back on the African worldview, it is important to remember that the African reality and experience includes a “village”. Therefore, while CRP provides a framework for educators and schools, it is also critical in the education of Black children to also understand and honor the role of other members within the village (elders, siblings, relatives, neighbors, etc.) in their contribution to the educational excellence of Black students. It is therefore our recommendation that as we explore the education of Black students, we must consider how CRP encompasses an African worldview while this approach also draws upon the spirit, voices, culture, and heritage knowledge of the collective community.

Family Centered Approaches to Learning

One critical element of the early childhood education field’s preparedness for and effectiveness in educating Black children and for researching best practices is to reframe how Black children and families are labeled and categorized. For example, terms such as at risk, disadvantaged, and minority, become synonymous with describing Black children (Hilliard, 2006). Instead, the research, policy, and education of Black children and families should represent their cultural strengths and knowledge. To reach this ideological utopia of viewing Black children within an affirming and responsive lens, one method cited in the research is implementing a family-centered approach (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008, 2009). A family-centered approach views children within the context of their families and communities. The family becomes an inseparable, integral part of the child’s educational socialization. A family-centered approach offers an opportunity for families to work in collaboration with one another and with educators.

A family-centered approach also offers opportunities for families and educators to form authentic partnerships in which each partner brings a special set of skills and strengths. Through such sharing of power, resources, and funds of knowledge, everyone benefits: early childhood professionals, families, and children (Espinoza, 2010). One critical benefit of a family-centered approach is it begins to establish a continuity of care between home and program, maximizing the chance for cultural consistency and the implementation of culturally relevant education that draws upon African centered beliefs, teaching, and learning (Iruka, Durden & Kennel, 2015).

Early childhood professionals have the opportunity to learn effective and innovative teaching and guidance strategies as they observe parents interacting with their child and exchange information with them. In turn, by observing and partnering with teachers, parents learn from teachers how to view their child within a developmental context rather than just within the context of home and family (Gonzalez-Mena, 2009).

And So How are the Children? Let’s Explore!

This review of literature provides a brief glimpse of the related literature that highlights the importance of quality early childhood educational experiences for Black children and provides specific strategies, beliefs, and cultural value systems that must be present in order to make these experiences culturally meaningful and effective for Black students. The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, families, and early childhood professionals caring for young Black children within the Santa Clara County community. As the researchers engage with participants, it is our intention to explore and learn how Black children within the community are experiencing culturally responsive and quality early childhood educational experiences and services and to make practical, policy, and community-based recommendations on how to further enhance these experiences to maximize children’s preschool readiness and long term success. So we begin this education assessment and research project with the question Casserian Engeri: And how are the children? Using the benchmarks of quality for Black children outlined in this essay, we will proceed in exploring and learning from the community to begin to answer this question.

References


Systemic Oppression, Transgenerational Trauma, and the Education of African-American School Children

Cirecie A. West-Olatunji, Ph.D.
Xavier University of Louisiana

“Self-deprecation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from the internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold on them. So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything—that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive—that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness…” (Freire, 2000, p. 49).

The legacy of the systemic oppression of Africans in the Americas over the past four centuries is manifested in the contemporary lives of African Americans and illuminated in the psychological and emotional distress evident in recent research (Cross, 1998; Danoff-Burg, Prelow & Swenson, 2004; Harrell, 2000; Rich & Grey, 2005; Scott, 2003; Seaton, 2003). Contemporary researchers have examined racism-related stress and several factors, such as hopelessness (Odafe, Salami & Walker, 2017), life satisfaction (Driscoll, Reynolds & Todman, 2014), suicide (Walker et al., 2016), and sexual risk behaviors among adolescents (Bowleg et al., 2014). Such historical trauma experienced by African Americans is explored at the macro level to examine how the trajectory of trauma at a particular time period compares to the symptoms present in unexposed members of the group. Using this framework, historical trauma suggests: (a) mass trauma, (b) trauma experienced over a long period of time, (c) reverberating traumatic events evident throughout the population, and (d) the cultural high jacking of the group’s natural cultural trajectory, all resulting in social, cultural, and political marginalization leading to cultural menticide across generations (Sotero, 2006). For African Americans, this translates as being out of one’s African mind or losing one’s cultural consciousness.

Transgenerational Trauma

Most recently, clinical researchers have begun to investigate the intergenerational effects of traumatic experiences on human behavior. This research documents the effects of traumatic stress or the long-term, pervasive victimization on the psychological well-being of not only the survivors, but of later generations. These trauma responses include: hypersensitivity in normal interactions (resulting in aggressive or violent responses), reliving of internal terror to perceived threats in their environment, and numbed affect (Herman, 1992). Often there is a conspiracy of silence that prevents atrocities from being discussed resulting in amplified feelings of loneliness, isolation, and mistrust (Danieli, 1998). Furthermore, studies of intergenerational trauma demonstrate that trauma creates patterns that are repeated within family systems thus impacting multiple generations.

Traditionally, the study of transgenerational trauma involved identifying a traumatic event which has ended but that is continuing to impact subsequent generations through transmission from those who experienced the event. Assessing how African Americans have been historically and transgenerationally impacted by the traumatic experience of slavery is complicated due to the lack of a clear ending of racialized marginalization of Africans in America (Cross, 1998). While cultural hegemony and racial supremacy formed social patterns during institutionalized slavery, current forms of marginalization are manifested somewhat more subtly in the form of structural institutional racism and bias. An example of one such adverse legacy is the attribution of African American students’ underachievement to racial/genetic deficits, stemming from the long-held view that African Americans are intellectually or genetically inferior to Whites (Cross, 1998; Goff, Jackson, Di Leone, Culotta & DiTomaso, 2014).

Educating African American Children in Urban Poverty and Affluent Suburban Contexts

Numerous studies have shown that traumatic stress can have a negative impact on children’s educational achievement (Jones, Trudinger & Crawford, 2004; Kinard, 2001; Margolin & Gordis, 2000; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001). As a result, assessing traumatic stress within the school environment is necessary to improve students’ academic and psycho-social developmental outcomes, especially for children of African descent who are apt to be at greater risk for traumatic stress in both urban and suburban contexts (Breslau, Kessler, Chilcoat, Schultz, Davis & Andreski, 1998). Integrating an understanding of racism as traumatic stress into the conceptualization of students’ schooling experiences—whether in predominately Black and urban or more affluent racially isolating suburban contexts—permits educators to aid in ameliorating this concern. Students’ traumatic experiences both within and outside of the academic context can have severe psychological and behavioral consequences. An understanding of traumatic stress is critical for educators since traumatic stress symptoms are often misinterpreted as attention or behavior problems, particularly for students of African descent, meaning that these students may experience aggravated trauma above and beyond the primary exposure (Levine & Kline, 2007; West-Olatunji, 2008).

Media Influence. In addition to primary exposure that may include micro- and macroagressions from peers and educators in the schooling environment as well as implicit bias in social, civic, and vocational settings, exposure to ethnic-racial violence recorded and projected in the mass media may also have adverse effects on African American students’ well-being. In a study employing the Modern Racism Scale (MRS), Dixon (2008) examined the relationship between racial stereotypes of African Americans in the media and perceptions of African Americans as a group. The results from this investigation suggested that African Americans were overrepresented in poverty-stricken and drug affected-roles in the media compared to their White counterparts. Dixon introduced the term, modern racism, defined in three parts: (1) anti-African American emotional hostility towards African Americans, (2) resistance to the political demands of African Americans, and (3) the belief that racism is dead and racial discrimination no longer inhibits African Americans. Although it has been asserted that television influences have a negative effect on adolescents, some scholars have suggested that there are mediating factors. For example, Ward (2004) offered that, when African American adolescents have a strong religious background and ethnic identity, there are no significant negative outcomes from television usage. Other scholars have stated that a strong racial and ethnic identity can serve as a coping strategy, especially for African American girls (Gandy, 2001; Seaton, Yip & Sellers, 2009).

Ethno-political Violence. Another factor influencing the academic achievement of African American children is state-sanctioned ethnic and racial violence (e.g., racial profiling) resulting from institutional/structural racism. Ethno-political violence lays the foundation for traumatic stress and places these children at risk for long-term effects of childhood adversity (Burke-Harris, 2018; Cholwa & West-Olatunji, 2008). Characterized by four key aspects, ethno-political violence considerations include: (a) degree of exposure, such as duration, type, frequency, or proximity; (b) degree of involvement (e.g., whether the individual is a passive victim, soldier, etc.); (c) how individuals process the experience, emotionally and cognitively; and (d) an individual’s response to the experience (Dubow, Huesmann & Boxer, 2009). Researchers have reported that, for African American
boys in particular, perceptions of institutional racism were correlative to both internalizing (depression and anxiety) and externalizing (interpersonal conflicts and aggression) behaviors (Nyborg & Curry, 2003). Moreover, it has been suggested that, regardless of income, African American children are vulnerable to negative systemic forces that marginalize their heritage knowledge and denigrate their ethnic and cultural identity (King & Swartz, 2014, 2016). According to Crouch, Hanson, Saunders, Kilpatrick, and Resnick (2000), as household income increases, prevalence of witnessing violence, receipt of physically abusive punishment, physical assault, and sexual assault decreased for White but not African American or Latinx youth.

Recommendations

Rather than experiencing marginalization and traumatic stress due to the cultural hegemony embedded in the curriculum and in teaching practices, schooling experiences for students of African descent might offer opportunities for these students to fulfill their developmental potential. Interventions that have been suggested as effective in countering the institutionalized bias and systemic oppression that occurs in schools include teaching practices that: (a) incorporate critical and higher order thinking (West-Olatunji & Behar-Horenstein, 2005); (b) integrate an understanding of the students’ sociopolitical realities and foster social justice ideals (Hyland & Noffke, 2005); and (c) reflect cultural sensitivity and bridge students’ heritage knowledge with the educational tasks of the required curriculum (Gordon, 1995; King, 2004; King & Swartz, 2014, 2016). Moreover, it has been suggested that culture-centered instruction (in particular, African-centered instruction) not only serves as an educational intervention against cultural discontinuity caused by ethnocentrism and curriculum bias in classrooms but also a psychological one (Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008). Such effective, culturally responsive practices within the schools, including ethnic studies curricula, have resulted in academic gains for culturally diverse students and African American students of African descent, in particular (Coffey & Farinde-Wu, 2016; Foster, 1997; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

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Bibliographic Essay

John William Templeton

This treatment extracted data collected first for the Redevelopment Agency of San Jose in a Historical Resource Evaluation of a proposed new site for the African-American Community Service Center in 2010. Upon further queries by the Black Education Assessment research team an oral history investigation inadvertently demonstrated the pedagogy principles articulated the essay, “The Black Education Excellence Traditions Which Shaped Santa Clara County,” Wilbur Jackson, secretary of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley, sent an e-mail to people he thought would know. Eventually more than 30 persons would be questioned without anyone knowing for certain. But preparing this essay permitted us to develop new knowledge about the first Black graduate of San Jose State University, and her brother, a movie star in the 1920s and 1930s.

Every leaf we turned opened the gates to a forest of fascinating discoveries. ReUNION: Education-Arts-Heritage provided a number of resources for context: Road to Ratification: How 27 States Faced the Most Challenging Issue in American History provides basic belonging data for each of the states that approved the 13th Amendment in 1865. Because most Black people in early Santa Clara County migrated from elsewhere, this book gives a context for their activity once they arrived.

“Our Roots Run Deep: The Black Experience in California, Vols. 1-4 is an encyclopedic compilation of primary source materials, peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters designed to give a broad overview of the central role of blacks in every stage of the Golden State history.

Come to the Water: Sharing the Rich Black Experience in San Francisco was the context statement on African-American history in San Francisco prepared for the Historic Preservation Fund Committee. Many of the personalities were also active in Santa Clara County.

Dr. Herbert Ruffin, chair of African-American Studies at Syracuse University, is a home-grown Santa Clara scholar who turned his interests into the 2014 book Uninvited Neighbors: African-Americans in Santa Clara County 1769-1990. Having grown up in Milpitas in a business-owning family, he gave the rich detail of personal experience to a lavishly researched compendium. We contacted Dr. Ruffin, Associate Professor of History and African American Studies at Syracuse University in New York by email. He was also generous to offer additional insights and referrals in response to our questions.

We acknowledge the support of the African-American History House, led by Ocie Tinsley and wife Mattie Tinsley, and the Inez Jackson Black Resource Center library at the African-American Community Service Center.

Online histories of Antioch Baptist Church, and First A.M.E. Zion confirmed more details. Jackson’s 1979 book by the Garden City Women’s Club is a valuable contemporaneous portrait.
Yet, the accumulation only convinces us that the surface has only been scratched.

Sourisseau Academy for Local and State History at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library of the City of San Jose and San Jose State University scanned through yearbooks to determine that Lucy Turner was the first Black graduate of State Normal School.
Appendix C:
Context and Findings

Figure 1
Race & Ethnicity
- Percentage of Total Population -
Scope: Population of California and Santa Clara County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITE 1</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC 2</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIXED 3</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER 4</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Count: Number of members in ethno-racial group
1 - Non-Hispanic
2 - Excluding Black and Asian Hispanics

Data Source: https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Race-and-Ethnicity
### Figure 2: Median Household Income by Race

**Scope:** Households in California and Santa Clara County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>100%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>102k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>93.2k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Hawaiian</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: [https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Household-Income](https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Household-Income)

### Figure 3: Household Income Distribution by Race

Independent household income distributions of the given ethno-racial groups, normalized so that the sum of each interval is 100%.

**Scope:** Households in Santa Clara County

<table>
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<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>151k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150-200K</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>102k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$125-150K</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>73.5k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100-125K</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>93.2k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75-100K</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>107k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60-75K</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>69.2k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50-60K</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>48.9k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45-50K</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24.3k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40-45K</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27.7k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35-40K</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23.0k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30-35K</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24.9k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25-30K</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26.7k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20-25K</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>27.1k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15-20K</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25.7k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10-15K</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26.7k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$10K</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32.4k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Source:** [https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Household-Income](https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Household-Income)

**Race Definitions:**
1. Non-Hispanic White
2. White Hispanic
3. Including Hispanic
Figure 4

**FOOD STAMPS BY RACE**
- Percentage of given ethno-racial group on food stamps -

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>5,118</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC 1</td>
<td>8,032</td>
<td>248%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK 1</td>
<td>2,137</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN 1</td>
<td>6,314</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER 1</td>
<td>28,6k</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIXED 1</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>113%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** https://statisticalatlas.com/county/California/Santa-Clara-County/Food-Stamps

Figure 5

**2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments Mathematics**
Overall Results, Percent of Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard, Santa Clara County vs. California

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Af. Am.</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Not ED</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>SWD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2016 - 17 Santa Clara County, 2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments Mathematics, Overall Results, Percent of Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard; p10목 #4  [https://www.sccoe.org/depts/esb/assessment/AssessmentDocLibrary/2016-17CAASPPAnalysis.pdf]

Figure 6

**2015 - 2017 Percent of Santa Clara County Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard in English Language Arts/Literacy by Student Group and Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Af. Am.</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Not ED</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>SWD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2016 - 17 Santa Clara County, 2015-2017 Percent of Santa Clara County Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard in English Language Arts/Literacy by Student Group and Year, p11 #5 [https://www.sccoe.org/depts/esb/assessment/AssessmentDocLibrary/2016-17CAASPPAnalysis.pdf]
### Executive Summary

2014

**African/African Ancestry Health Assessment**

### Figure 7

2015-2017 Percent of Santa Clara County Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard in Mathematics by Student Group and Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Af. Am</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Not ED</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>SWD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2016-17, 2015-16, 2014-15 Percent of Santa Clara County Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard in Mathematics by Student Group and Year. [Link](https://www.sccoe.org/depts/educ/assessment/Assessment%20Library/2016-17%20CAASPP%20Analysis.pdf)

### Figure 8

2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: Mathematics Overall Results, Percent of Santa Clara County Student Groups at Each Achievement Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement Level</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Not Econ. Disadv.</th>
<th>Econ. Disadv.</th>
<th>Students with Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Not Met</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Nearly Met</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Met</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Exceeded</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Figure 9

2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: English Language Arts/Literacy Overall Results, Percent of Santa Clara County Student Groups at Each Achievement Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement Level</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Not Econ. Disadv.</th>
<th>Econ. Disadv.</th>
<th>Students with Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Not Met</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Nearly Met</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Met</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Exceeded</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 10**

2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
Mathematics Results, Percent of Santa Clara County Students
Meeting or Exceeding Standard; Displaying the Achievement Gap
between Asian Students and Other Student Groups

**Figure 11**

2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
English Language Arts/Literacy
Overall Results, Percent of Economically Disadvantaged (ED)
Ethnic Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard,
Santa Clara County vs. California

**Figure 12**

2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
Mathematics
Overall Results, Percent of Economically Disadvantaged (ED)
Ethnic Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard,
Santa Clara County vs. California

---

Data Source: Santa Clara County Office of Education, Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments

Data Source: Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2016 - 17, 2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: English Language Arts/Literacy Overall Results, Percent of Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Ethnic Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard, Santa Clara County vs. California, p17, #11

Data Source: Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2016 - 17, 2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: Mathematics Overall Results, Economically Disadvantaged, p17, #11
Executive summary

2014

African/African Ancestry Health Assessment

---

Table: % Met or Exceeded Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Santa Clara County</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Af. Am. Not Ed</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Not Ed</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino Not Ed</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Not Ed</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Not Ed</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Figure 14: 2017 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments English Language Arts/Literacy Overall Results, Percent of Not Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Ethnic Student Groups Meeting or Exceeding Standard, Santa Clara County vs. California

Figure 15: 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance - Students in Santa Clara County -

EAST SIDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016-2017

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2018, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance

https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc
### Figure 16

**12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance**

**MILPITAS UNIFIED HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016-2017**

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2017, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance, https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Asian, Not Hispanic</th>
<th>Filipino, Not Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Two or More Races</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 17

**12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance**

**PALO ALTO UNIFIED HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016-2017**

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2017, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance, https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Asian, Not Hispanic</th>
<th>Filipino, Not Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Two or More Races</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total # of Grads                          | 23               | 329                 | 161                    | 149               | 61    |
| % of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses | 26.1             | 72.3                | 50.3                   | 49.2              | 52.6  |
Figure 18

12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance - Students in Santa Clara County

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2018, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance, https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th># of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
<th>Total # of Grads</th>
<th>% of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Not Hispanic</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino, Not Hispanic</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19

12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance - Students in Santa Clara County

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2018, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance, https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th># of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
<th>Total # of Grads</th>
<th>% of Students with UC/CSU Required Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Not Hispanic</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino, Not Hispanic</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office Data as of 1/26/2018, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance, https://tinyurl.com/y9gjpjfc
Education that affirms our children’s African identity and African heritage is important for their success in school and in life.

Our community would benefit from a school with an emphasis on African/African ancestry culture, that is, an African-centered school.
Youth Online Questionnaire Responses

- "I see myself as African." (N = 59)
  - Teachers protect me from racial discrimination at school.
    - 30%
    - 40%
    - 50%
    - 60%
    - 70%
    - 80%
    - 90%

- "I am bi- or tri-racial." (N = 24)
  - I would rather attend a school where most of the students are Black.
    - 38%
    - 58%
  - I feel uncomfortable in class when topics of race come up.
    - 38%
    - 48%
  - Other students and teachers think that I am very smart.
    - 38%
    - 57%
  - I would like to participate in a Saturday school with other African ancestry students to learn about my heritage.
    - 25%
    - 26%
    - 36%
    - 46%

Many educators set lower expectations for African/African ancestry students than for students of other races/ethnicities.

Education that helps our students to identify with their African/African ancestry and cultural heritage is important for their success in school and life.
I am concerned that teachers and school officials do not protect my children from racial discrimination at school/child care.

School district discipline policies are administered unfairly in Santa Clara County and are harming African/African ancestry children and youth.

Education is not a real priority for African/African ancestry parents.
Appendix D:
Quantitative Research Protocols

Research Protocols I. - Quantitative Data Collection Activities

1. Adult Survey - Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet Santa Clara County Education Assessment

Adult Survey

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) has initiated an education assessment of African/African Ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County. This study endeavors to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African Ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Education Assessment of African/African Ancestry Children and Youth in Santa Clara County

Researchers: Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman

What is the Purpose of this Study? This study seeks to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will explore how our children and youth learn best, elements of an African-centered education as well as the way racism impacts our community’s academic success. Your perspective on these critical issues is important to making sure African/African ancestry children and youth are receiving an excellent and equitable education. We invite you to participate in the data collection phase of the study.

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions, or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Dr. Joyce King and Dr. Linda Tillman will have access to the information you provide. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, click appropriate box below:

- I agree to participate in the study. (1)
- I do NOT agree to participate in the study. (2)
Start of Block: Demographic Questions

What is your age range?
- 18 - 24 (2)
- 25 - 34 (3)
- 35 - 44 (4)
- 45 - 54 (5)
- 55 - 64 (6)
- 65 - 74 (7)
- 75 - 84 (8)
- 85 or older (9)

What is your marital status?
- Married (1)
- Domestic Partner (6)
- Widowed (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Separated (4)
- Never married (5)

How long have you lived in Santa Clara County?
- 0 - 3 years (1)
- 4 - 6 years (2)
- 7 - 12 years (3)
- 12+ years (4)

My family has lived in Santa Clara County for several generations (including my parents, grandparents, etc.).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My family (or I) came here (immigrated or migrated) from:
- Yes. From where (1) ________________________________________________
- No (2)

What is your highest level of education?
- Less than high school (1)
- High school graduate (2)
- Some college (3)
- 2 year degree (4)
- 4 year degree (5)
- Masters Degree (8)
- Professional degree (M.D., Law, etc.) (6)
- Doctorate (7)

What is your employment status?
- Employed full time (1)
- Employed part time (2)
- Business Owner (8)
- Homemaker (14)
- Unemployed looking for work (3)
- Unemployed not looking for work (4)
- Retired (5)
- Student (6)
- Disabled (7)

What is your occupation? (Check apply that apply)
- Educator (1)
- Physician (2)
- Attorney (3)
- Civil Service Employee (state, city, county) (4)
- University/College Employee (5)
- IT/Finance (13)
- Business Owner (7)
- Silicon Valley Employee: Computing, Engineering, Manager, etc. (8)
- Social Service/Healthcare Employee (9)
- Faith Community Employee (6)
- Non Profit Employee (11)
- Other (Please explain) (10) ________________________________________________

What is the name of your neighborhood or school district?
________________________________________________________________
Memberships (Check all that apply)
- Sorority/Fraternity (1)
- Civic/Advocacy Organizations (3)
- Parent Group/Organization (4)
- Church/Mosque (2)
- Labor union (6)
- Other: (8)

End of Block: Demographic Questions

Start of Block: Parents

Do you agree with the following statements?

Education is not a real priority for many African/African ancestry parents.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many educators set lower expectations for African/African ancestry students.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

African/African ancestry students need to achieve both academic and cultural excellence (mastery of the curriculum and knowledge of their heritage).
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

African/African ancestry parents can help teachers learn about our children.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

The African/African ancestry community in Santa Clara County can benefit from an African-centered School.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don’t know. (29)

Educators in Santa Clara County understand the specific academic experiences and traumatic experiences of African/African ancestry students.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don’t know. (29)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because of their behavior.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because they lack motivation.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because they lack adult support.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because of their race.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Sports offer the best opportunities for African/African ancestry children to succeed in Santa Clara County.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Education that affirms our students’ African identity and heritage is important for their success in school and in life.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don’t know. (25)

Santa Clara County schools are preparing African/African ancestry students for success academically and in life.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don’t know. (29)
School/District discipline polices are administered unfairly in Santa Clara County and are harming African/African ancestry children and youth.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don’t know (3)

I attended Santa Clara County schools in the past.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

I attended a college or University in Santa Clara County.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I volunteer or support Santa Clara Schools in other ways.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I am employed in Santa Clara County.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Are you a K-12 Educator in Santa Clara County?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Santa Clara County educators understand the ways that our children and youth learn best and use that knowledge to provide effective instruction for African/African ancestry students.

- Yes (4)
- No (5)
- I don’t know (6)

I am aware that some African/African ancestry educators in Santa Clara County schools are afraid to openly advocate for our children and youth.

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

The absence of African/African ancestry adults (as teachers, administrators, parent volunteers, etc.) in the schooling experience of our children is harmful to them.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Educator Questions

Thank you!

If you have additional information you would like to provide, you can write about it below.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

End of Block: End
2. Parent Survey

Start of Block: Consent Block

INFORMED CONSENT Study Title: The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Education Assessment of African/African Ancestry Children and Youth in Santa Clara County Researchers: Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman. What is the Purpose of this Study? This study seeks to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in this research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions, or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Dr. Joyce King and Dr. Linda Tillman will have access to the information you provide. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally, unless you have given your permission above. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, appropriate box below:

- I agree to participate in the study. (1)
- I do NOT agree to participate in the study. (2)

End of Block: Consent Block

Start of Block: Demographic Questions

What is your age range?

- 18 - 24 (2)
- 25 - 34 (3)
- 35 - 44 (4)
- 45 - 54 (5)
- 55 - 64 (6)
- 65 - 74 (7)
- 75 - 84 (8)
- 85 or older (9)

What is your marital status?

- Married (1)
- Domestic Partner (6)
- Widowed (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Separated (4)
- Never married (5)

How long have you lived in Santa Clara County?

- 0 - 3 years (1)
- 4 - 6 years (2)
- 7 - 12 years (3)
- 12+ years (4)

My family has lived in Santa Clara County for several generations (including my parents, grandparents, etc.).

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

My family (or I) came here (immigrated or migrated) from:

- Yes. From where: (1) __________________________________________
- No (2)

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What is your highest level of education?
- Less than high school (1)
- High school graduate (2)
- Some college (3)
- 2 year degree (4)
- 4 year degree (5)
- Masters Degree (8)
- Professional degree (M.D., Law, etc.) (6)
- Doctorate (7)

What is your employment status?
- Employed full time (1)
- Employed part time (2)
- Business Owner (8)
- Unemployed looking for work (3)
- Unemployed not looking for work (4)
- Retired (5)
- Student (6)
- Disabled (7)
- Homemaker (14)

What is your occupation? (Check apply that apply)
- Educator (1)
- Physician (2)
- Attorney (3)
- Civil Service Employee (state, city, county) (4)
- University/College Employee (5)
- Business Owner (7)
- Silicon Valley Employee: Computing, Engineering, Manager, IT, Finance, etc. (8)
- Social Service/Healthcare Employee (9)
- Faith Community Employee (6)
- Non Profit Employee (11)
- Other (Please enter your occupation) (10)

I work in Santa Clara County.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

What is the name of your neighborhood or school district?

Memberships (Check all that apply)
- Sorority/Fraternity (1)
- Civic/Advocacy Organizations (3)
- Parent Group/Organization (4)
- Church/Mosque (2)
- Labor union (6)
- Industry Association (7)
- Social Group (8)

Check all that apply. I am a:
- Parent (1)
- Grandparent (2)
- Legal Guardian (3)
- Great-grandparent (4)
- Caretaker (5)

How many children do you have or care for?
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 or more (5)

How old is your child/are your children? Check all that apply.
- 0 - 3 years (1)
- 4 - 6 years (2)
- 7 - 12 years (3)
- 13 - 18 years (4)
- Older than 18 (5)

How many of your children attend or attended schools in Santa Clara County?
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5+ (6)
What type of school/s do (did) your children attend? (Check all that apply)
  - Public  (1)
  - Private  (2)
  - Charter  (3)
  - Parochial  (4)
  - Home school  (5)
  - Church school  (6)
  - N/A  (7)

End of Block: Demographic Questions

Start of Block: Parents

It is important for educators to understand the specific academic experiences and needs of boys and girls of African/African ancestry.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)

Sports offer the best opportunities for African/African ancestry children to succeed in Santa Clara County.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)

My child has been / my children were reluctant to identify with their African ancestry and heritage.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)

Many educators have lower expectations for African/African ancestry students than for students of other races/ethnicities.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

I have a child /children with an identified disability who is/were placed in a special class.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)

Education that helps our students to identify with their African/African ancestry and cultural heritage is important for their success in school and in life.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

There are current educational policies that negatively affect African/African ancestry students in Santa Clara County.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

African/African ancestry parents can help teachers support their children’s learning and development.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

The children and youth in our community would benefit from going to a school with an emphasis on our African/African ancestry and cultural heritage, that is, an African-centered school.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

The African/African ancestry community helps support the social, emotional, spiritual and academic performance of African/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
  - I don’t know.  (29)

Many African/African ancestry children underperform academically because of low teacher expectations.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)

Many African/African ancestry children underperform academically because they often do not see their culture or their life experiences in the curriculum.
  - Yes  (27)
  - No  (28)
Many African/African ancestry children underperform academically because of school discipline policies.

- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Santa Clara County schools are preparing African/African ancestry students for success academically and in life.

- Yes (27)
- No (28)

How many African/African ancestry teachers have taught your children?

- 0 (1)
- 1 (8)
- 2 (9)
- 3 (10)
- 4 (11)
- 5 (12)

I am concerned that teachers and school officials are not protecting African/African ancestry children from racial discrimination at school.

- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I teach my child/children about our history and culture at home to correct what they are learning at school.

- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I would like to be able to teach my child/children about our history and culture at home to correct what they are learning at school, but I need more information and resources.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

My child/children feels good about their experiences at school.

- Yes (34)
- No (35)

My child/children participate/s in out-of-school activities like chess, dance, tutoring, etc.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My child/children participate/s in after school sports.

- Yes (7)
- Maybe (8)
- No (9)

My child/children receive useful guidance about college and career opportunities at school.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Teachers/school officials need more training to meet the academic and cultural needs of African/African ancestry students.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don’t know (25)

My child/children are treated unfairly by school officials.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I regularly monitor and assist my child/children with homework.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Due to my work schedule, it is difficult for me to help my child/children with homework.

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

If I am unable to attend school meetings, I participate in my child/children’s education in other ways.

- Yes. I participate by (1) ____________________________

- No (2)
At home, my child/children and I talk about their school experiences.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I do not have enough information about the curriculum, school policies or procedures to help my child/children to succeed at school.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I would enroll my child/children in a school designed for African/African ancestry students.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I establish a relationship with my child/children’s teachers.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I review my child/children's academic progress online.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My child/children’s teachers communicate with me.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I attended Santa Clara County schools.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I need more information about how to change policies that negatively affect the African/African ancestry students in our community.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I am satisfied with the support I have received from teachers at my child/children’s school.
- Yes (33)
- No (34)

My child/children's teachers meet their individual learning needs.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

I am satisfied with the support from administrators that my child/children receive at school.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Resources are fairly distributed in Santa Clara County schools.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

Teachers and school officials are adequately prepared to teach African/African ancestry students.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because they lack adult support.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because they lack motivation.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African American/African ancestry students underperform academically because of their race.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Many African/African ancestry students underperform academically because of their behavior.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
End of Block: Parents

Start of Block: Educator?
Are you currently—or have you ever been—a K-12 educator in Santa Clara County?
- Yes (4)
- No (5)
End of Block: Educator?

Start of Block: Educator Questions
As an educator, I feel (felt) supported by African/African ancestry parents or other members of our community.
- Yes (5)
- No (6)

End of Block: Educator Questions

At times school officials or colleagues have criticized my efforts to meet the needs of African/African ancestry children and youth.
- Yes (5)
- No (6)

End of Block: Educator Questions

Santa Clara County educators understand the ways that our children and youth learn best and use that knowledge to provide effective instruction for African/African ancestry students.
- Yes (4)
- No (5)

End of Block: Educator Questions

I am aware that some African/African ancestry educators in Santa Clara County schools are afraid to openly advocate for our children and youth.
- Yes (5)
- No (6)

End of Block: Educator Questions

The absence of African/African ancestry adults (as teachers, administrators, parent volunteers, etc.) in the schooling experience of our children is harmful to them.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Educator Questions

Thank you! If you have additional information you would like to provide, you can write about it below.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

End of Block: Educator Questions
3. Parents of Young Children

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**Start of Block: Consent Block**

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**Study Title:** The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC)

**Education Assessment of African/African Ancestry Children and Youth in Santa Clara County**

**Researchers:** Joyce E. King and Linda C. Tillman

What is the Purpose of this Study? This study seeks to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success. It will explore how our children and youth learn best, the elements of an African-centered education as well as the way racism impacts our community’s academic success. Your perspective on these critical issues is important to making sure African/African ancestry children and youth are receiving an excellent and equitable education. We invite you to participate in the data collection phase of the study.

---

**Parents of Young Children Survey**

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) has initiated an education assessment of African/African Ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County. This study endeavors to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African Ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

---

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Dr. Joyce King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman will have access to the information you provide. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally, unless you have given your permission above. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

---

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, check appropriate box below:

- [ ] I agree to participate in the study. (1)
- [ ] I do NOT agree to participate in the study. (2)

---

**End of Block: Consent Block**

---

**Start of Block: Demographic Questions**

**What is your age range?**

- [ ] 18 - 24 (2)
- [ ] 25 - 34 (3)
- [ ] 35 - 44 (4)
- [ ] 45 - 54 (5)
- [ ] 55 - 64 (6)
- [ ] 65 - 74 (7)
- [ ] 65-74 (8)
- [ ] 75 or older (9)

---

**What is your marital status?**

- [ ] Married (1)
- [ ] Widowed (2)
- [ ] Divorced (3)
- [ ] Separated (4)
- [ ] Never married (5)

---

**How long have you lived in Santa Clara County?**

- [ ] 0 - 3 years (1)
- [ ] 4 - 6 years (2)
- [ ] 7 - 12 years (3)
- [ ] 12+ years (4)

---

**My family has lived in Santa Clara County for several generations (including my parents, grand parents, etc.)**

- [ ] Yes (1)
- [ ] No (2)

---

**My family (or I) immigrated here.**

- [ ] Yes, from: (4)
- [ ] No (5)
What is your highest level of education?
- Less than high school (1)
- High school graduate (2)
- Some college (3)
- 2 year degree (4)
- 4 year degree (5)
- Masters Degree (8)
- Professional degree (M.D., Law, etc.) (6)
- Doctorate (7)

What is your employment status?
- Employed full time (1)
- Employed part time (2)
- Business Owner (8)
- Unemployed looking for work (3)
- Unemployed not looking for work (4)
- Retired (5)
- Student (6)
- Disabled (7)
- Other (14) ________________________________________________

What is your occupation? (Check apply that apply)
- Educator (1)
- Physician (2)
- Attorney (3)
- Civil Service Employee (State, city, county) (4)
- University/College Employee (5)
- Business Owner (7)
- Silicon Valley Employee: Computing, Engineering, Manager, etc. (8)
- Social Service/Healthcare Employee (9)
- Faith Community Employee (6)
- Non Profit Employee (11)
- Other (Please explain) (10) ________________________________________________

What is the name of your neighborhood or school district?
________________________________________________________________

Memberships (Check all that apply)
- Sorority/Fraternity (1)
- Civic/Advocacy Organizations (3)
- Parent Group/Organization (4)
- Church/Mosque (2)
- Labor union (6)
- Social Group (8)
- Other: (7) ________________________________________________

I work in Santa Clara County
- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Check all that apply:
- Parent (1)
- Grandparent (2)
- Legal Guardian (3)
- Great-grandparent (4)
- Caretaker (5)
- Other: (6) ________________________________________________

How many children do you have or care for?
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 or more (5)

How old are your children?
- 0 - 3 years (1)
- 4 - 6 years (2)
- 7-12 (3)
- 13 or older (4)

How many of your children attend Santa Clara Schools or childcare facilities?
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5+ (6)
What type of school/childcare do your children attend? (Check all that apply)
- Public (1)
- Private (2)
- Charter (3)
- Parochial (4)
- Home school (5)
- Church school (6)
- Family daycare (7)
- Childcare center (8)

How many African/African ancestry teachers/childcare providers have your children or child had?
- 0 (1)
- 1 (8)
- 2 (9)
- 3 (10)
- 4 (11)
- 5 (12)

Many educators set lower expectations for African/African ancestry students than for students of other races/ethnicities.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don't know. (29)

African/African ancestry students need to achieve both academic and cultural excellence (mastery of the curriculum and knowledge of their heritage).
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don't know. (29)

Education that affirms our children’s African identity and African heritage is important for their success in school and in life.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don't know. (29)

There are current policies that negatively affect early childhood education and child care for African/African ancestry children in Santa Clara County.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know. (3)

African/African ancestry parents (and grandparents) can help their children’s pre-school teachers and child care providers support their children’s learning and development.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don't know. (29)

Our community would benefit from a school with an emphasis on African/African ancestry culture, that is, an African-centered school.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
- I don't know. (29)

Many African/African ancestry children under perform academically because they often do not see themselves in the curriculum.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)
Sports offer the best opportunities for African/African ancestry children to succeed in Santa Clara County.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

Santa Clara County schools are preparing African/African ancestry students for success academically and in life.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I am concerned that teachers and school officials do not protect my child/children from racial discrimination at school/child care.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I teach my child/children about our history and culture at home to correct what they are learning at school.
- Yes (34)
- No (35)

Pre-school teachers need more training to meet the academic and cultural needs of our children.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My child/children can see themselves in the learning materials used in their pre-school or child care facilities.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My child’s/children’s caregivers/pre-school teachers teach children to appreciate cultural diversity, including the cultural heritage of African ancestry children.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Pre-school teachers are not able to “handle” young African/African boys.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Some non-African/African ancestry teachers/educators have been very supportive of my child/children.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment contains images of people from diverse backgrounds (for example, diverse cultures and religions, and people of different ages).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment include images that go against existing stereotypes (for example, a Black physician instead of a Black cook).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment includes images of people with a range of different abilities and body types engaged in a variety of activities.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment includes images of many different kinds of family compositions and socioeconomic groups.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment includes images that demonstrate the geographic diversity of family dwellings, neighborhoods, and communities (for example, urban, rural, suburban).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The pre-school/child care environment includes images of people from diverse backgrounds interacting with one another.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
The pre-school/child care environment includes images that go against gender stereotypes.

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I would like to be able to teach my child/children about our history and culture at home to correct what they are learning at school, but I need more information and resources.

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

I am satisfied with the quality of care my child/children are receiving in Santa Clara County.

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Pre-school teachers and child care providers in Santa Clara County are adequately prepared to teach and care for African/African ancestry children.

- Yes (6)
- No (7)
- I don't know. (8)

Are you an educator in Santa Clara County?

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

End of Block: Parents

Start of Block: Educator Questions

As an educator, I feel (felt) supported by African/African ancestry parents or other members of our community.

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

At times school officials or colleagues have criticized my efforts to meet the needs of African/African ancestry children and youth.

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

Santa Clara County educators understand the ways that our children and youth learn best and use that knowledge to provide effective instruction for African/African ancestry students.

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

I am aware that some African/African ancestry educators in Santa Clara County schools are afraid to openly advocate for our children and youth.

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

The absence of African/African ancestry adults (as teachers, administrators, parent volunteers, etc.) in the schooling experience of our children is harmful to them.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Educator Questions
4. BLKC - Youth Survey

Start of Block: Block 1

INFORMED CONSENT  Study Title:  The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Education Assessment of African/African Ancestry Children and Youth in Santa Clara County
Researchers:  Joyce E. King and Linda Tillman What Is the Purpose of this Study? This survey explores how African and African ancestry students learn best. It also considers some barriers to students' academic success. Your views are important to making sure students like you are receiving an excellent and equitable education.

You do not have to complete this survey. If you start the survey and change your mind, you can stop at any time. You may skip questions, or stop at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any anything. We will keep your answers private. Dr. Joyce E. King and Dr. Linda C. Tillman will be able to see the information you provide. No one at school—your teachers or school officials—will see your responses. You will not be identified personally. If you have questions or concerns, please ask your parent to contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

Please indicate whether you are willing to participate in this survey below:
☐ I agree to participate in the study.  (1)
☐ I do NOT agree to participate in the study.  (2)

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Youth Questions

How long have you lived in Santa Clara County?
☐ 0 - 3 years  (1)
☐ 4 - 6 years  (2)
☐ 7 - 12 years  (3)
☐ All of my life  (4)

What school do you attend?

What grade are you in?
☐ 1  (1)
☐ 2  (2)
☐ 3  (3)
☐ 4  (4)
☐ 5  (5)
☐ 6  (6)
☐ 7  (7)
☐ 8  (8)
☐ 9  (9)
☐ 10  (10)
☐ 11  (11)
☐ 12  (12)

What is your favorite subject in school?

How many African American/African ancestry teachers have you ever had ?
☐ 0  (1)
☐ 1  (2)
☐ 2  (3)
☐ 3 or more  (4)

What is your current grade point average (GPA):
☐ 4.0 or higher  (1)
☐ 3.5 - 3.9  (2)
☐ 3.0 - 3.4  (3)
☐ 2.5 - 2.9  (15)
☐ 2 or below  (5)
☐ I don't know  (6)

Select "Yes" or "No" if you agree with the following statements.

I am treated the same as students of other races at school.
☐ Yes  (49)
☐ No  (50)
My school is getting me ready to be successful in life.
- Yes (60)
- No (61)

Teachers protect me from racial discrimination at school.
- Yes (39)
- No (40)

I have never been treated unfairly at school.
- I agree. (1)
- No, I have been treated unfairly at school. (2)

School officials protect me from bullying racial discrimination at school.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I feel uncomfortable in class when topics about race come up.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I do really well when I like the subject being taught.
- Yes (27)
- No (28)

I expect to graduate from High School.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I expect to graduate from college.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Sports matter to me much more than my academic studies and grades.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My parents attend parent conferences at school to talk with my teachers.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I usually have trouble finishing my homework assignments.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I would like to participate in a Saturday school with other African ancestry students to learn about my heritage.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

Most of my friends at school are not students of African ancestry like me.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I would like to attend an African-centered school with other students like me.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know. (3)

I know a lot about my African heritage.
- Yes, I agree. (23)
- No, I disagree. I do not know a lot about my African heritage. (24)

I like being at school to be with my friends—but not because of what I am learning.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Some teachers have said positive things about my race (Black people).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some teachers say negative things about my race.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (4)</td>
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<td>- No (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would rather attend a school where most of the students are Black</td>
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<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am active in school clubs and activities</td>
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<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My parents don’t like to come to my school. They don’t feel welcome.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes, I agree. (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No, my parents like to come to my school. (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s hard for me to pay attention in class, when all the teacher does is</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes, I agree. (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No, I don’t have a problem paying attention when the teacher talks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sometimes I skip school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have been picked on or bullied at school by other students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I see myself as African.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes, I agree. My heritage is African. (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No. I disagree. I do not see myself as African. (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am bi –tri-racial. I have a mixed heritage. (25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have good school attendance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what it takes to get good grades in my classes.</td>
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<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I prefer being around my school friends who are not of African ancestry.</td>
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<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bi-racial (mixed race) students are not treated unfairly at my school.</td>
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<td>- Yes (30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I have problems at school, I ask a teacher or school official or</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>counselor for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I have problems at school, I ask a friend for help.</td>
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<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I have problems at school, I ask my family for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I have problems at school, I don’t ask anyone for help. I keep silent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoy being challenged academically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t think I would be able to get a technology job in Silicon Valley.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Yes (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No (24)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am not sure. (25)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Other students and teachers think that I am very smart.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

I have been blamed at school for something I did not do.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I have learned about my African/African heritage at school.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My parents/family have high expectations of me.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)
- I don't know. (25)

I spend a lot of time on social media (like Snap Chat, Instagram).
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

The racial climate at my school makes me feel uncomfortable.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I would like to be involved in school activities that affirm my culture.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

My teachers don't care whether I learn or not.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

People at school criticize what I wear.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

I constantly have to prove myself at school.
- Yes (23)
- No (24)

If I could be anything I wanted to be in life, I would rather be a:
- Movie star or Singer or Rapper (1)
- Surgeon (2)
- Sports legend (3)
- Scientist (4)
- Engineer (12)
- Video game designer (8)
- Lawyer (5)
- Teacher (6)
- Business Owner (13)
- Other (7)

I would really like to have a Black (African ancestry) teacher.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- It doesn't matter. (3)

I would like to learn more about my history and culture at school.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- It doesn't matter. (3)

Most of my teachers just don’t like me.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Students of African ancestry at this school don’t have any problems because of our race. Everyone is treated the same.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Enslaved Africans made very important contributions to the development of this country.
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't now. (3)
Slavery has been a part of almost every nation’s history.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

The enslaved Africans who came to this country lost their culture and everything they knew.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If you have any other information you want to share, you can write about it below.

________________________________________________________________

End of Block: Youth Questions

5. BLKC Community Forum Evaluation

Thank you for attending the forum today. We are hoping that this forum met the needs of our community, and we’d appreciate your feedback. Please take a few minutes to complete this form.

Q1. Why did you attend this forum?

Q2. Where did you hear about the forum (please circle)?

- poster/flyer
- print Advertisement
- social media: Facebook/Twitter
- email
- word of mouth
- other

Q3. Did this event help you learn more about issues that impact the education of African/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County?

- Yes
- No

Q4. What did you like most about the forum?

__________________________________________________________________________

Q5. What did you like least about the forum?

__________________________________________________________________________

Q6. Could this event have been improved?

- Yes
- No

How?

__________________________________________________________________________

Q7. Please rate the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The location was convenient</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| The venue was appropriate   |                |                  |
|-----------------------------|                |                  |
| 1 2 3 4 5                   |                |                  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There was adequate time provided for questions</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall, the speakers were knowledgeable</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The forum was well organized</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
My concerns/comments were heard and valued

Q8. Please rate the Presenters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Needed Improvement</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 1: Brenda Ray</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker 2: Dr. Joyce E. King</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaker 3: Dr. Linda C. Tillman</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Panel #1:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q9. Would you like to be kept up-to-date with the progress of issues that impact the education of African/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County?
Yes
No
If yes, please provide your email address

Q10. Would you like to get involved and take action on issues that impact the education of African/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County?
Yes
No
If yes, please provide your email address

I am (Check all that apply):
___ a Parent   ____ an Educator   ____ a Student   ____ a Community member

Other comments
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for completing this form!

Appendix E: Qualitative Research Protocols
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROTOCOLS AND DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

Black Educators Focus Group Conversation Prompts

The Researchers began the Focus Group Conversation began by asking the participants to reflect upon something personal with feeling—a memory—to get everyone’s voice in the conversation in a way that situates them in their own historical reality. (Adapted from King & Mitchell (1995). Black Mothers to Sons: Juxtaposing African American Literature with Social Practice. New York: Peter Lang.

Next, the Researchers quickly shared reflections on personal experiences related to education.

1. Share a memory: something they recall from your childhood—like a memory of something that smelled or tasted really good. Say where you were growing up and share a childhood memory of a smell or a taste. Anyone who wants to pass can say, “Pass.”

   King: I remember going to work in the fields with my grandmother in Stockton when I was about 7 and eating strawberries right off the vine. They were warm from the sun and tasted sweet.

Next the Researchers shared a story (Example).

King: When I was Director of teacher education at Santa Clara one of my students told my class that when her Resident Teacher orientated her for her teaching assignment, the Teacher said: Now you don’t have to pay any attention to those black kids over there at that table—they are the “black-blacks”-- they have Black values and they won’t learn anything at all. This group over here will benefit what you do in class because they have white values”.

Discussion Questions (20 minutes each)

1. What is happening to African/African ancestry students in this County?

2. What is happening to African/African ancestry (Black) educators in this County? Are you Black at work?

3. What could make a difference for students or for you—to remove barriers to quality education, that is, both academic and cultural excellence (students’ mastery of the curriculum and positive identification with their heritage)?

African/Caribbean Immigrants Focus Group Protocol

1. First we start by asking everyone to say “Good morning” in your home language, then share a memory—something you recall from you childhood—like a memory of something that smelled or tasted really good. Say where you were growing up and share childhood memory of a smell or a taste. Anyone who wants to pass just has to say, “I pass”.

2. We begin by asking everyone to share a memory: something they recall from their childhood—like a memory of something that smelled or tasted really good. Say where you were growing up and share childhood memory of a smell or a taste.

   My memory: I was about 5 or 6—before I went to school in my Village in Mali (West Africa)—I remember how much I liked the smell of grilled fish on the fire. I grew up near the river. I also remember the smell of parboiled rice—when it was freshly harvested.

   We go around the room. Anyone who wants to pass just has to say, “I pass”.

3. Facilitator: Dr. Hassimi Maiga opens with a personal memory.

   Here’s my story—The first problem is language and also the way the classes are taught and organized. All this is confusing. My daughter came here at 13 years-old and she didn’t speak English.

   Then suggest 3 or 4 questions that people can choose to discuss: (20 minutes for each question)

4. What is happening to African immigrant children in Santa Clara County and children whose parents immigrated to this country?

   Probe – ask about the Curriculum and Policy issues; barriers to quality education; how do they get along with African American students?

5. What have you experienced as a parent dealing with the schools and with educators in Santa Clara County?

6. What do you think could make a difference—what do you think is needed for your African immigrant children or for you—to remove barriers to quality education (for academic excellence and cultural excellence—mastery of the curriculum and positive identification with their heritage)?
Key Nominee Interview Protocol

1. Could you describe your current connection or past history with Black education in Santa Clara County?

2. What is the current situation for students of African/African ancestry in Santa Clara County?

3. What would you say needs to be changed?

4. Research indicates that culturally relevant teaching offers a solution. Are you familiar with this educational approach? What would it take to implement this approach in Santa Clara County?

5. Research also indicates a connection between poverty and racial disparities in education. Would you say that poverty is a factor in the academic performance of Black students in Santa Clara County?

6. Are you aware of racial disparities regarding Black student overrepresentation in suspension and expulsion?
   - What are some reasons that African/African ancestry students are being disciplined or expelled unfairly?
   - Are Black students, especially Black males, engaging in more disruptive behaviors that require discipline/punishment? (drugs, alcohol, weapons)
   - How would you describe what is happening to Black girls? Research indicates that while Black boys are seen as threatening, Black girls are often seen as unsophisticated, hyper-sexualized, loud, unladylike and defiant. Do educators in Santa Clara view Black girls this way and treat them accordingly?
   - Would you say white students are referred more often for observable offenses (smoking, vandalism) but Black students get referred for behavior that involves teachers’ subjective judgments (e.g., being “disrespectful”, making “excessive noise”)?

7. Are Black students experiencing negative peer pressure? That is, are they not achieving because they fear their peers will say they are “acting white”?

8. What policy changes are needed to raise African/African ancestry students’ academic achievement and well-being? Ask: Are you aware of any policy issues/recommendations related to: school climate; students’ learning styles, curriculum issues, gender issues, allocation of resources (if not mentioned).

9. What would you say are community defined-best practices in education?

10. Can you describe any barriers to access to quality education in Santa Clara County for African ancestry students?

11. Are you aware of programs or activities in Santa Clara County schools (or the community) that honor African American cultural traditions? Are these effective?

12. Would you say that African ancestry students have a particular learning style? Could this be part of the problem or could it be part of the solution?

13. Some people believe educational disparities are a function of weak family and community structures—that is, absent fathers, male unemployment, drug abuse, and permissive cultural values? What do you think about these issues?

14. Some say academically successful Black students are exceptions and they are successful because they embrace and actualize a white cultural-value system. Does this apply in Santa Clara County?

Here are 8 True / False Statements

14. Black parents are not invested in their children's education and do not engage in school-affirming behaviors.

15. A much higher percentage of white parents than Black parents attend PTA meetings and parent-teacher conferences.

16. Black parents are satisfied with permissive academic and discipline standards in the schools their children attend.

17. Most urban and center-city teachers and principals are Black.

18. White educators are more qualified than Black educators.

19. There are more Black men in prison than in college.

20. Black kids use more alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs than white kids.

Additional Questions

21. What might be a strategy or intervention to benefit African Ancestry students in Santa Clara schools?

22. Are you aware of any exemplary programs in schools or in the community that ought to be supported or scaled up (made available to more students)?

23. What role can the Black community at-large play to support the academic success of African ancestry students? (What is needed for that to happen?)

24. Studies indicate that African-American and Latino students benefit tremendously when they attend schools with high concentrations of African-American or Latino teachers. They are...
Do you think African ancestry students in Santa Clara County are negatively affected in these ways because there are so few Black educators in Santa Clara County schools?

25. **Parents**: What does active engagement look like for you as a parent? How active are you (or were you) in your child’s education?

26. **Parents**: Thinking about the care of young children, are there particular things that you think care givers should be doing for Black children’s development and well-being?

27. **Teachers**: What are your thoughts about or your experiences with Black parent engagement? In what ways are Black parents engaged? Or are they generally not engaged in their children’s education?

28. **Teachers/Administrators/Board Members**: How about Black educators doing in Santa Clara County? What is it like to be a Black teacher or administrator?

29. **Day care/early childhood caregivers**: Can you share any thoughts about young Black children’s cultural identity development and what you do as care giver?

30. **“30 Somethings”/Young Adults**: What was your experience like as a student in Santa Clara County schools? (When?) Are things any different today?

31. Are there any questions you think we should be asking that I did not ask?

---

**BLKC Steering Committee Feedback Prompts**

1. **Group Suggested Topic or Question. 20 min.**

2. **This is a very familiar logic that applies to many successful Black people: There is a tendency in a highly racist environment to treat Black people who achieve a lot as exceptions. Many white people with extraordinary achievements would say “I individually am special”. But many Black/African ancestry people in the Diaspora with extraordinary achievements would say: “I, individually, in being exceptional, am not like them” (other Black/African ancestry people). Does this apply here in Santa Clara County? 20 min.**

3. **Parents today as compared to parents in previous years—what has happened here in Santa Clara County? Are parents today the problem? Can they be the solution? What is the role of the Black/African ancestry community? 20 min.**

4. **What does “success” mean for African Ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County today (Write your response). 10 min.**
Appendix F: Using the Findings for Community Education

EDUCATING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. Commentary: Online Adult Questionnaire Response

Steering Committee Questionnaire. Please complete and return to Dr. Joyce King (drjoyce-king@yahoo.com) or Brenda Ray by Wednesday, June 6.

1. Please read the commentary below, which was provided by an adult online survey respondent. Imagine that you are in conversation with this member of the community. Given your hopes and aspirations for the outcomes of the Education Assessment, how would you respond? What would you want this person to understand? What do you agree with or disagree with?

(I) Suggestion: for future surveys it would be good to define what you mean by Afrocentric schools/curricula;

(II) Curricula that lead to readily attained employment: if an Afrocentric school or curriculum is developed, it is imperative that it not just teach Black history, dance, and entertainment, but rather that it teaches skills and provides information that can equip students to be employable, and encourage those that desire a college education to major in something in which they may more easily find employment. Degrees and fields such as African-American studies result in a person having an education, but they do not make a graduate really employable. I hate to see students work hard to graduate with a degree, finish college with nothing but a degree they can’t use in employment and a bunch of debt. As the highest paying fields are the sciences, technology, engineering, and math, this should be a primary focus in our curricula.

(III) As you are aware, many minority students not just Blacks underperform because their parents are unable or unwilling to help them at home. Possible solutions: (1) An Afrocentric school that organizes the school day such that all homework can be completed at school; (2) Hire retired teachers of all races since Black students will have to work “for” and “with” all races; (3) Partner with the Black church and/or Black Greek organizations; (4) Partner with HBCUs: Affirmative action will end, and since our students do not perform as well as other races on college entrance exams, HBCUs will be more vital than ever. Since those schools depend on Black enrollment for their livelihood, perhaps they would be willing to partner with your organization. God bless.

1. Steering Committee Member reviewed and wrote responses (Two examples)

#1 An African centered education is one that instructs in all disciplines and includes how this study can serve, advance, develop African people. Development of critical thinking skills that understand how the Maafa perpetual systems of white supremacy operate in the world and how to destroy them. Value the ways that African people gain knowledge and understand the world (socially, biologically, economically, ecologically, philosophically) and build on that
knowledge base and continue to develop it. African centered education is constitutive of African-based cognitive systems that African peoples use to structure and make sense of existence. An African centered education will assist our children in being prepared to navigate this Eurocentric milieu with the tools to understand how systems of white supremacy operate and to navigate this milieu effectively as they work to dismantle them for the betterment of all humans.

#2 (I/II) There are many assumptions in the above comments. When I think of an Afrocentric curricula, I envision a curricula that includes academic, social-emotional, growth-mindset, cultural, spiritual, and psychological components that encourage and support the development of the whole child of African ancestry that is developed, implemented, and evaluated by people of African ancestry. Healthy children (regardless of race) can succeed in any field of employment if raised and educated in a healthy environment that values and nurtures them. This is why HBCUs produce very successful students of African ancestry in all fields of employment.

(III) This statement assumes that the only reason students of color underperform is because of lack of parent involvement. Studies contradict this statement and show that there are many factors impacting the achievement gap between Black students and students of white or Asian ethnicities (income, under-resourced schools, teachers with less experience, fewer AP classes offered, fewer resources for underperforming and high-performing students, etc.

I appreciate the possible solutions offered, although many of them are already provided on some level. I look forward to seeing you take leadership and get involved in strengthening these “solutions” and programs for our students.

2. Invited Scholars /Consultants Respond

A. African Centered Schools/Curricula

While educating ourselves and our five children (and now twelve grand children) in a toxic, demeaning and racist environment, we have thought about and lived this question for a very long time. The question of African centered education is fundamental to our very humanity. It is more than educating Black children for work or employability. We were fully employed (without payment) during our 400 hundred + years of enslavement. The bigger question is how education for African American children prepares them to manage and master the future. While the immediate issues of educating to facilitate marketability in various high paying fields of employment; organizing the school day; hiring retired Black Teachers; and partnering with HBCUs are important, they alone do not address the fundamental question of educating for humanity and the future.

We believe that the educational process and pedagogy for African American children must be aligned with and grounded in what it means to be fully human. We note that “When the human spirit is well, whole, and healthy, being human is experienced and characterized by confidence, competence and a sense of full possibility and unlimited potentiality.” Accordingly, African centered education by definition must prepare our children to not just find employment but to be the authors and architects of the very social, political and economic systems that determine the acquisition of the resources that literally sustain life and living. As such, a major outcome of African centered education should be to prepare our children to be active participants anywhere on the stage of humanity and to have the capacity to deliver, create, incorporate, and influence human systems that are capable of connecting with community and devoted to the restoration of wellness for African American persons, families, and community.

Vera L. Nobles, Africologist, Linguist and Teacher Educator
Wade W. Nobles, Skh Djarist and Co-Founder of The ABPsi

B. Notes from an African Perspective on Education

Afrocentric schools/curricula or education cannot be limited to Black History, Dance, and Entertainments...This is already a biased perception of it.

“Education, from an African perspective, is about the mastery of oneself; while Instruction, is about the mastery of a subject matter. You can have one without the other. Thus, a holistic approach should consider enhancing and integrating both realities.”

Dr. Hassimi Maiga
Notes on Classical Songhoy Education and Socialization 2002

Moreover, in addition to “teaching skills and provide information that can equip students to be employable,” it may also fit to set up a training profile that will enable students not only to get conventional jobs as marketed; but also more importantly, to help create workplaces where social entrepreneurship may be initiated, developed, and exhibited as alternatives models to just the hunt for a JOB.

These workplaces should later become a Community Heritage Asset (CHA), in order for this educational process to expand in time and in space. This approach will create a sense of belonging among African/African ancestry people of Santa Clara County. And as a result, these workplaces cannot be shipped abroad, because they are a foundational heritage of a given community.

Amiiru, Dr. Hassimi O. Maiga
 Paramount Chief of Songhoy
 Vice President, Academy for Diaspora Literacy, Inc.
C.

“What Do You Mean by Afrocentric Curricula?”
Circie A. West-Olatunji, Ph.D.

A Readers Theatre Script

Setting:
Several African American parents and community stakeholders from a middle class, suburban community are in attendance at a seminar located at the local public library entitled, “Afrocentric Curricula: Educating the Human Spirit,” and provided by a renowned female African American university scholar. Following the presentation, a question and answer period ensues.

Attendee A: What do you mean by Afrocentric schools/curricula?
Scholar: . . . Let me summarize what my colleagues, Dr. Wade Nobles and Dr. Vera Nobles, were discussing recently. We were talking about this very issue. Here’s the point: The educational process—what we teach and the way we teach our children—children of African ancestry—must always be aligned with and grounded in what it means to be fully human. As such, a major outcome of African centered education should be to prepare our children to be active participants anywhere on the stage of humanity and to have the capacity to deliver, create, incorporate, and influence human systems that are capable of connecting with community and devoted to the restoration of wellness for African American persons, families, and community.

Attendee A (continues):
Well, it seems to me that that most important thing is that the curriculum... [should] provide information that can equip students to be employable, and encourage those that desire a college education to major in something in which they may more easily find employment. There are too many young people going to school and graduating with no skills. And I don’t see how what you are calling African centered can help anybody get a job.

Scholar: African centered education by definition must prepare our children not just to find employment but to be the authors and architects of the very social, political, and economic systems that determine the acquisition of the resources that literally sustain life and living. The bigger question is how education for African American children prepares them to manage and master the future. [To the other parent attendees] What are you all thinking?

Attendee B:
I am in agreement ... that the curriculum offered should match the needs of our society for individuals to be competent in STEM areas... in addition to graduating with employable skills based on interest.

Attendee C:
My hope for students in a school like this is that they would be able to see themselves as scientists and engineers because they are constantly exposed to variety of options and see themselves racially/ethnically in those options. A successful Afrocentric school would prepare our students to be competitive in any area, and in these areas as well. At the same time they should be comfortable with who they are and maintain a strong sense of personal identity and connection to their heritage.

Scholar: The question of African centered education is fundamental to our very humanity. Let me break this down. African centered education is more than educating Black children for work or employability. We were fully employed (without payment) during our four hundred + years of enslavement. As such, a major outcome of African centered education should be to prepare our children to be active participants anywhere on the stage of humanity. They will have the capacity to deliver, create, incorporate, and influence human systems and connect with community and be devoted to the restoration of wellness for people of African ancestry, our families, and community.

Attendee A: ... many minority students not just Blacks underperform because their parents are unable or unwilling to help them at home.

Attendee C: [Your] statement assumes that the only reason students of color underperform is because of lack of parent involvement. Studies contradict this statement and show that there are many factors impacting the achievement gap between Black students and students of white or Asian ethnicities (income, under-resourced schools, teachers with less experience, fewer AP classes offered, fewer resources for underperforming and high-performing students, etc.

Two weeks ago there was an incident at my daughter’s private school (primarily white, Asian, and Indian). An Indian student walked up to a Black student and her friend and began calling her the “N” word. The Black student reported it to the administration... There has been no comment about whether he will be expelled or not allowed to return to the school. This school has zero tolerance for drugs and bullying, but no formal policies in place regarding racism.

Attendee D: I have heard about several incidents at local colleges where our students were target-ed with “racial slurs” and name calling episodes such as use of the “N” word and other students making “monkey sounds” when they passed certain dorm buildings. [I think]... it is the joint responsibility of “the village” to provide the proper nurturing and support that our children need to survive in a climate that does not favor their contributions to society.

Attendee E: ... I believe that a school which is tailored to build up and not tear down Black students would set them up to be a successful in anything they want to be.

Scholar: I think what we are really talking about is “Education for liberation”...mean[ing] those forms of education that are intended to help young people think more critically about the social forces that are shaping our lives and to think more confidently about their
ability to react against those forces1…is important [especially] in a toxic, demeaning, and racist environment. While the immediate issues of educating to facilitate marketability in various high paying fields of employment; organizing the school day; hiring retired Black teachers; and partnering with HBCUs —what we have been talking about at this seminar—is important, they alone do not address the fundamental question of educating for humanity and the future.

[Thank you and good evening!]

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Appendix G: Commissioned Artwork: Editorial/Political Cartoons

EDITORIAL/POLITICAL CARTOONS
BY CHARLES E. “CHUCK” SILER

I DON'T GET IT...

THIS HAIRSTYLIST IS CALLED AN "AFRO," NOT AN AFRICAN "PRES.

JOHN HENRIQUE CARNESE SAID THERE IS NO AFRICAN "LAND." HE CALLED HIS VIEWS "AFRICAN CENTRIST."

SO WHAT DID AFRICANS CONTRIBUTE TO CIVILIZATION?

PYRAMIDS, MEDICINE, UNIVERSITIES, RELIGION, MATH, ASTRONOMY ... SHALL I CONTINUE?

So, do you call yourself black or biracial?

HUMAN.
THE BILLIONAIRE BROTHERS FROM MICHIGAN HAVE GOTTEN 'INTO' EDUCATION ... THEY'RE TRYING TO GET KIDS HIGH ON KOCH...
Appendix H: Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation
### Figure 31, Code Memos

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### Figure 32, Open Coding Cloud Representation

[Image of a coding cloud representation]

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**Executive Summary**

2014 African/African Ancestry Health Assessment
Figure 33, Results of Axial Coding, Quality Education

Figure 34, Results of Axial Coding, Racism and Discrimination
Appendix I: Outreach Resources

The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) has initiated an education assessment of African/African Ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County. This study endeavors to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

Drs. Joyce E. King and Linda C. Tillman will be conducting this assessment. Your perspectives on this critical issue are important to making sure African/African ancestry children and youth are receiving an excellent and equitable education. We invite you to participate in the data collection phase of the study.

Please check if you are willing to participate in the

___Adult survey ___ Group interview ___ Individual Interview
___Student survey ___ Telephone interview ___ Community forum

Check all that apply:
I am a Parent ___ Educator ___ Student ___ Other ____________________________

Name_________________________________________
Neighborhood or school district ________________________________
Email/contact information _______________________________________
(please type clearly)

If you have any questions or would like to participate, you may contact members of the Steering Committee, listed below, or leave a message for the researchers or the Steering Committee at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org

Steering Committee Members

Leon Beauchman  Sharon Ogbo  Walter Wilson
Brenda Ray       Yvonne Maxwell

Thank You!

A COMBINATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, BUSINESS OWNERS AND INDIVIDUALS IN SILICON VALLEY
Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Steering Committee Research & Outreach Strategies

The outreach methodology was based on the scope of the work developed between the BLKC Steering Committee and the researchers. The outreach was conducted for promoting awareness and encouraging people to be participants in the research assessment.

The decision was made that the sample population would be 400 adults, 100 youth, 25 community leaders, the Alliance of Black School Educators’ focus group and a community focus group. The strategies to gain input were agreed upon. Online surveys were decided to be the most expedient and successful method, consuming the least time. We had one year to complete the research.

The nine-member Committee planned to have a certain number of the adult participants recruited within specific categories. For example, 72 should be educators, 46 parents of early learners, 42 young adults/college, 37 health profession, 31 university students or professors, 25 clergy, 18 after-school services personnel, 13 immigrants, 12 homeless, 8 beauticians, 16 civic/community, 3 judicial, etc. Monthly counts were made until the target was met, then the group concentrated on another category and effort was exerted to meet those numbers. The majority were met. The system (Qualtrics) we utilized to track and disperse the initial emails, did not provide the support expected.

Email appeals and calls were utilized to invite participation in the online surveys. Visits to churches, public events, community meetings, and schools entailed a great deal of scheduling and community involvement. The Committee tracked the social-economic status of participants and the number of completed surveys in each category. The Committee requested that a percentage of the adult participants be parents of children birth to five years old. When potential participants were approached in person, they were asked to complete a form giving information regarding their email and school district, etc. That process was successful but when emailed the link to the survey, the return response from the same participant was often nil. After sending emails twice and in some cases three times, Committee members decided to send personal emails with “Urgent Appeal” to people they knew personally. That method yielded the number needed.

The Committee identified sources to gather information on foster youth, homeless, and immigrants but access to the youth was consistently hindered by a variety of factors. The requirement of written parental or guardian approval extended the time it took to recruit one youth. Numerous attempts for months failed to yield participants.

The greatest challenge was soliciting input from our youth. Two unified school districts sent the survey link with a letter to all their African/African Ancestry students. The Committee called the homes of 108 students, the Alliance of Black Educators hosted a student recognition event for 350 students where 35 youth signed up to participate for a gift card, on the premises. Many students left with the form in their hands saying they would take the survey. The above efforts resulted in only 88 youth completing the survey. Why?

The Research Team was given information regarding community leaders whom we called Key Nominees. The list also included young adults. All twenty-six were interviewed, via phone, within a two-month period.

Two Community Forums were held. One was advertised via announcements in churches, email blast and personal emails from the committee. Only 43 people attended. The second one we had three different agencies’ email blast, we called agencies and businesses, made urgent appeals again to our friends, and sent an email blast outside of the county. Over one hundred people attended. Thirty-three individuals and eighteen organizations and agencies pledged to assist in solutions to issues revealed in the research assessment.

One might conclude that in Silicon Valley there are many people who are uncomfortable opening email they do not recognize by name. Making the effort to telephone was more effective than emailing. We have no proof that was the case with the youth. We need to interview the youth to discover why the response to the survey was low and incomplete, even when given an incentive, and when they had given their word to participate. The target for our youth was the only unachieved objective.
African/African Ancestry Health Assessment

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African/African Ancestry Health Assessment

What is the Purpose of this Study?

This study seeks to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African American/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

Your perspectives on this critical issue are important to making sure African American/African ancestry children and youth are receiving an excellent and equitable education. We invite you to participate in the data collection phase of the study.

Please check if you are agreeing to participate in the:

- Adult survey (20 min.)
- 90 min. Group interview
- 1-hour Individual Interview
- Student survey (20 min.)
- 3-hour Community forum

Please check if you agree to be:

- Audio recorded
- Video recorded
- Photographed
- Identified by Name

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions, or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Dr. Joyce King and Dr. Linda Tillman will have access to the information you provide. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally, unless you have given your permission above. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, sign below.

Name: _____________________________  Signed: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

e-mail address: _____________________________  Tel: ____________________________

What Is the Purpose of this Study?

The purpose of this study is to understand the educational experiences and outcomes of African American/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County. The study aims to identify barriers to education and explore the impact of racism on academic success.

What Are the Objectives of this Study?

The objectives of this study include:

1. Gathering data on the educational experiences and outcomes of African American/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County.
2. Identifying barriers to education and their impact on academic success.
4. Developing strategies to address these barriers and improve educational outcomes for African American/African ancestry children and youth.

What Are the Implications of this Study?

The implications of this study are significant for several reasons:

1. It will provide valuable insights into the educational experiences and outcomes of African American/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County.
2. It will help identify barriers to education and their impact on academic success.
4. It will contribute to the development of strategies to address these barriers and improve educational outcomes for African American/African ancestry children and youth.

What Are the Benefits of this Study?

The benefits of this study include:

1. Improved understanding of the educational experiences and outcomes of African American/African ancestry children and youth in Santa Clara County.
2. Identification of barriers to education and their impact on academic success.
4. Development of strategies to address these barriers and improve educational outcomes for African American/African ancestry children and youth.

What Are the Risks of this Study?

The risks of this study are minimal. Participation in research is voluntary and does not involve any risks that are not normally associated with daily life. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

What Are the Research Methods of this Study?

The research methods include:

- Surveys:
  - Adult survey (20 min.)
  - Student survey (20 min.)
- Interviews:
  - Group interview (90 min.)
  - Individual interview (1 hour)
- Community forum (3 hours)

What Are the Data Collection Methods of this Study?

The data collection methods include:

- Audio recording
- Video recording
- Photography
- Identification by name

How Is the Data Collected?

The data will be collected through surveys, interviews, and community forums. The data will be recorded and stored in a secure database. The data will be analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and patterns.

Who Will Have Access to the Data?

The data will be stored in a secure database and only accessible to the researchers at the Education Assessment. The data will not be identified personally, unless you have given your permission above. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions, or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Dr. Joyce King and Dr. Linda Tillman will have access to the information you provide. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally, unless you have given your permission above. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the BLKC Steering Committee or leave a message for the researchers at the Education Assessment e-mail: edassessment@blkc.org.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, sign below.

Name: _____________________________  Signed: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

e-mail address: _____________________________  Tel: ____________________________

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: The Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) Education Assessment of African/African Ancestry Children and Youth in Santa Clara County

Researchers: Joyce E. King and Linda C. Tillman

What Is the Purpose of this Study?

This study seeks to gather data that explores and identifies barriers to education, including policies that impede or negatively influence African American/African ancestry children and youth in our education system. It will also explore the way racism impacts our community’s academic success.

Your perspectives on this critical issue are important to making sure African American/African ancestry children and youth are receiving an excellent and equitable education. We invite you to participate in the data collection phase of the study.

Please check if you are agreeing to participate in the:

- Adult survey (20 min.)
- 90 min. Group interview
- 1-hour Individual Interview
- Student survey (20 min.)
- 3-hour Community forum

Please check if you agree to be:

- Audio recorded
- Video recorded
- Photographed
- Identified by Name

If you decide to be in the study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life. Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions, or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

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If you are willing to volunteer for this research and participate in this activity, sign below.

Name: PRINT  Signed:  Date:  
e-mail address:  Tel:  

EDUCATION ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SCHOOLS AS OF 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR:

- African/African Ancestry Students: 5,192 of 273,264 students
- African/African Ancestry Teachers: 266 of 13,317 teachers
- African/African Ancestry Administrators: 55 of 1,055 administrators

DISTRICTS WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF AFRICAN/AFRICAN ANCESTRY STUDENTS:

- San Jose Unified: 799
- Santa Clara Unified: 450
- East Side Union High: 639
- Oak Grove Elementary: 373

RESEARCH OBSERVATIONS ABOUT AFRICAN/AFRICAN ANCESTRY STUDENTS:

1. African American youth are perceived as more adult-like and less innocent than their peers in other groups.
2. African American history, especially slavery, is poorly taught and marginalized in high school history courses.
3. African American females with the darkest skin tone and African features are twice as likely as white females to be suspended from school.
4. African American girls’ risk being disciplined when they are perceived to violate racialized gender norms that dictate how “respectable” young ladies should behave.

ETHNIC STUDIES IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

An evaluation of San Francisco Unified School District’s ninth-grade ethnic studies pilot program found that the course increased ninth-grade student attendance by 21 percentage points, GPAs by 1.4 grade points, and credits earned by 23.

Assembly Bill 2016, signed into law in September 2016, requires California’s Instructional Quality Commission to bring together scholars and practitioners to develop, and the state board to adopt, a model ethnic studies curriculum, and encourages districts and high schools to offer ethnic studies courses based on this model curriculum, which is scheduled to be completed in 2019.

FINDINGS FROM BLACK MINDS PROJECT (Community College Equity Assessment Lab, San Diego State University (SDSU) and the Black Male Institute. University of California, Los-Angeles (UCLA))

- The statewide suspension rate for Black males is 3.6 times greater than that of the statewide rate for all students. Specifically, while 3.6% of all students were suspended in 2016-2017, the suspension rate for Black boys and young men was 12.8%.
- The highest suspension disparity by grade level occurs in early childhood education (Grades K through 3) where Black boys are 5.6 times more likely to be suspended than the state average.
- Black male students who are classified as “foster youth” are suspended at noticeably high rates, at 27.4%. Across all analyses, Black males who were foster youth in seventh and eighth grade represented the subgroup that had the highest percentage of Black male suspensions, at 41.0%.
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AFRICAN CENTERED/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT SERVING SCHOOLS

BAY AREA SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS:

1. Ile Imode, Oakland, CA (http://www.ileimode.org/index.php): is an African-centered school founded by WoSet Community of the Sacred African Way in Oakland. We are dedicated to the call to be “keepers of the legacy.” We are an independent, private school in Oakland, California, providing instruction to children from preschool through 8th grade.

2. Sankofa Academy, Oakland, CA (https://www.ousd.org/Domain/1589): Sankofa Academy opened during the 2004-05 school year to embody and understand the following: “We must go back and reclaim our past so we can move forward; so we understand why and how we came to be who we are today.” Our school was founded as a New Small Autonomous School in an effort to alleviate overcrowding and underachievement in the Oakland Unified School District. Sankofa Academy emphasizes student empowerment and academic achievement.

3. Oakland Unified School District-African American Male Achievement Program, Oakland, CA (https://www.ousd.org/domain/78): was launched in 2010 and creates the systems, structures, and spaces that guarantee success for all African American male students in OUSD. African American Male Achievement is an ambitious project designed to dramatically improve academic and ultimately life outcomes for African American male students in Oakland. AAMA is leading the school district by analyzing the patterns and processes that are producing systemic inequities.

4. Oakland Unified School District-African American Female Excellence Initiative, Oakland, CA (https://www.ousd.org/Domain/4434): is a targeted initiative of OUSD’s Office of Equity to create a highly visible and proactive collaborative to accelerate academic achievement among African American girls and young women in OUSD, and to address the disparities in educational and social outcomes for African American girls and young women from preschool through high school.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS:

1. Marcus Garvey School, Los Angeles, CA (http://mgsla.org/): is a co-educational pre-k and elementary private school in Los Angeles established by Dr. Anyim Palmer in 1975. Marcus Garvey School stays in-tune with the distinctive foundation of cultural awareness and sensitivity that is integral to the success of young people in metropolitan locales. The teaching of one history develops a child’s self-awareness and lends itself to a clearer understanding of what should be expected in the future.

2. Sheen Educational Foundation-Sheen School & Culture Center, Los Angeles, CA (http://www.sheenwayschools.org/): began serving the Watts/South Los Angeles communities in 1971 as a living laboratory of learning and teaching for total education, in a country schoolhouse setting. SEF is a search of wisdom - an umbrella prototype for global education, teaching and learning without borders. Diversity and multicultural enrichment weave into the dreams of tomorrow. Parents, the first teachers, join hands with SEF, the community and beyond, bonding into the village that raises the child.

3. African American Cultural Center-Limbiko Tembo School, Los Angeles, CA (http://africanamerican-culturalcenter-la.org/programs/limbiko-tembo-school/): An educational institute for children ages 3-11 which sponsors a Saturday school program stressing African American history and culture, social responsibility, respect for human diversity and community service. Our goal is to teach students knowledge of the world, knowledge of themselves in the world, how to successfully engage the world and how to direct their lives toward good and expansive ends.

4. View Park Preparatory Charter High School, Los Angeles, CA (http://vphs.icefps.org/): created by the Inner City Education Foundation Public Schools (ICEF) to bring a strong college prep curriculum to inner city youth in Los Angeles. In 1999 View Park Prep Charter School began as an elementary school, with the subsequent opening of the middle school in 2002 and the high school in 2003. ICEF operates 12 schools educating over 4,000 students in grades K through 12. ICEF was one of the first charter school management organizations in Los Angeles and has become a leader in increasing the achievement of African-American and Latino/Hispanic students in the state of California.

UNITED STATES SCHOOLS:

1. Freedom Home Academy International, Atlanta, GA (http://www.fhaintl-atlanta.org/): African centered independent home school in Atlanta, Georgia focused on culture and high level education for toddlers through middle school. We focus on developing and enhancing children intellectually, socially, and physically.

2. Pearl Academy Math & Science Institute, Atlanta, GA (https://www.pearlacademy.org/): a college preparatory institute situated in a residential setting on a 5-acre wildlife habitat. Since August 2000, the mission has been the advancement of academic excellence with a particular emphasis on math and science, and an environmental approach to sustainability. Our focus is to enlighten students in grades K-12 through a rigorous and culturally relevant curriculum that inspires critical thinking and emphasizes the development of sound character, academic excellence and a global world view.

3. Romar Academy, East Point, GA (http://www.romaracademy.org/index.html): Mrs. Peggy A. Hinson established Romar Academy in August, 1978, as a non-sectarian preschool through 6th grade independent school. The name “Romar” was derived from the combination of the letters of Mrs. Hinson’s two sons, RObert and MARtin. A third son, Jeffrey, was born during the inception of Romar Academy. We recognize that we are in partnership with parents to ensure that education, discipline, and time management at home compliments that received at school.

4. United Africans of America, Atlanta, GA (http://www.unitedafricansofamerica.com/u-a-o-a-early-learning-community-co-op/): is an organization committed to the restoration of “OUR culture and community” as a whole and the unification of all African peoples residing...
in America. Through our work, we aim to motivate a collective force in progressing politi-
cally, financially and socially. Our Early Learning Community Cooperative, a play based early
childhood center is a groundbreaking, family focused share that prepares young children for
success as productive citizens of the African Diaspora.

5. Frederick Douglass High School, Atlanta, GA (https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/
Page/14199): was established in 1968 as a comprehensive public high school in a historically
Black section of Southwest Atlanta. The continuing goal is to serve students with an educa-
tion inspired by the life and legacy of Frederick Douglass, one of the foremost leaders of the
abolitionist movement, which fought to end slavery within the United States in the decades
prior to the Civil War. Douglass provided a powerful voice for human rights and is still a
significant source of inspiration for current students.

6. Kilombo Academic & Cultural Institute, Decatur, GA (http://kilomboschool.com/): We
will educate children and adults using an African centered methodology. It will provide an
education under girded with, permeated by, our rich African heritage. We will be
intentional about providing and developing Imani, a faith-based, moral, spiritual and ethical
climate that cultivates a decision making process grounded in African values. We will model
the tools of the ethical and moral life using principles of Maat: (truth, justice, righteousness,
order, reciprocity, harmony and balance). We will provide students with the spiritual, intel-
lectual, physical and emotional skills and discipline needed to realize that they are beautiful,
capable and divine to make a positive impact on the world.

7. Nsoroma Academy for Holistic Thought, Baltimore, MD (http://www.nsoromaacademy-
forholistichought.org/): a private-independent school serving children from Pre-Kindergarten
through grade 6, enthusiastically committed to being a part of the change in the conscious-
ness of our local and global community. Our mission is to provide a progressive, engaging
and stimulating learning environment that awakens the natural genius within each child while
supporting and affirming a balanced, thriving relationship with self, spirit, and community.

8. Paige Academy, Boston, MA (http://www.paigageacademy.org/): an independent school of-
fering a comprehensive, culturally affirming and developmentally based educational environ-
ment. We provide Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Programs as well as our Elementary School
curriculum in Arts, Sciences, Humanities, and Technology for children ages 6 to 12 years. We
embrace the concept that cultural resonance expressed through an ethnically abundant educa-
tional community enhances the quality of a child’s academic and intellectual experience.

9. The Garvey School, Bronx, NY (http://www.garveyschool.org/): is a private, co-educational
(Nursery - Grade 6) school which utilizes both traditional and progressive teaching strat-
egies. The Garvey School prides itself on its ability to provide a nurturing and supportive
environment where we believe that true learning occurs when students actively participate
in the process of discovering. At Garvey, we educate and nurture mind, body, and spirit. The
Garvey School instills within each child a sense of community and ethical duty. Students are
encouraged to express excellence through academic achievement, but they are also charged
with the duty to use their specific attributes to create change.

10. Little Maroons Community Cooperative, Brooklyn, NY (http://www.littlemaroonscom-
munity.com/): is a parent-supported childcare cooperative operating from a child-led, Afri-
can-centered curriculum rooted in indigenous wisdom. In the spirit of the Maroon communi-
ties, the children and their families are encouraged to embody the principles of independence
self-determination and cooperation. We offer your family more than a preschool or after-
school. We offer a loving, safe, communal, personal and cooperative educational environment
for your child to grow.

11. Little Sun People, Inc., Brooklyn, NY (http://www.littlesunpeople.com/): is a unique com-
munity child day care service founded in 1980 by Fela Barclift, LSP Director. From humble
beginnings to an established community preschool; our mission is to educate children in their
most formative years about the history and culture of all people of color with a particular
emphasis on people of African ancestry. Throughout our curriculum and many of our enrich-
ment programs, we reflect the great beauty, goodness and countless contributions of Black
and Brown people throughout the world.

com/): is the very first school of its kind to combine the Montessori Method of teaching and an
African Centered approach to learning. As a school, our concern is for the total child and our
program is designed to provide children with the opportunity to gain pride, sense of self,
self-acceptance, maximize their creative potential and promote social development.

13. The Learning Tree Cultural Preparatory School, Brooklyn, NY (http://www.learning-
treeprep.org/): is an independent school accredited by the New York State Department of
Education. We have been serving the Bronx, Districts 10 and 11, and surrounding commu-
nities for over three decades. We enroll approximately 300 students in grades Pre-K through
8th. Imagine a school where learning is a joy; where the curriculum is designed to prepare
students for a changing world; where everyone discovers the exhilarating chemistry between
academics and the arts to ensure that we nurture, educate and graduate the next generation of
leaders.

org/): an institution of Arts and Culture. We employ a system of Inquiry based learning where
students are encouraged to explore, question, create solutions to the everyday processes of
our human experience. Our goal is to expose our students to the various concepts of our ever
changing world through inquiry, Arts, technology and knowledge of ancient culture. We
believe in respecting the knowledge of our ancient cultures while being able to facilitate the
technological advancement of our generation in the modern world.

org/): currently in our 38th year and are steadfast in our commitment to offering excellence
to our students and the community. CCGC started as a home-based school back in 1980 with
a group of four children that were participants in the Founder/Director’s doctoral research
project. In 1982, CCGC moved into its own building and expanded to include not only pre-
school but also elementary school. As the word spread, the student population grew and have
continued to succeed based upon our theories concerning education. The Center has grown to
become a preeminent private non-sectarian educational institution with an annual enrollment of nearly 300 students from pre-k through 5th grade.

16. Institute of Positive Education, Inc.’s New Concept School, Chicago, IL. (http://www.ipech.org/new-concept-school.html): In 1969, the Institute of Positive Education (IPE) was founded by Dr. Haki Madhubuti and his wife Rafisha Madhubuti, Ms. Soyini Walton, Mr. Johari Amin and supported by other visionaries. The phrase "We are building leaders and workers to bring about a positive change for our people" was the guiding force behind establishing New Concept School, formerly the New Concept Development Center in 1972. We are dedicated to the academic and cultural development of children 2 1/2 to 5 years old. Our curriculum is designed to foster teamwork and to challenge the the academic, social and physical development of our students as well as promote our heritage as African people.

17. Betty Shabazz International Charter Schools, Chicago, IL (https://www.bsics.org/): Established in 1998 as an African-centered network of charter schools comprised of two Chicago campuses: Betty Shabazz Academy (grades K-8) and Barbara A. Sizemore Academy (grades K-8). Our mission is to provide every student with a safe and nurturing learning environment, and an academically rigorous and culturally relevant educational program that graduates students who excel in reading, oral and written language, mathematics, science, technology, social studies, and the arts and humanities. From inception, our school has consistently produced exemplary, high achieving students who have self-confidence, a strong sense of cultural identity, and a commitment to make positive contributions to their community and the world.

18. Freedom Home Academy International, Chicago, IL (http://www.schoolsofliteracy.org/index.html): In an African centered context, our purpose is building African children to be exceptional, academically intense, driven, and disciplined human beings. Our organic approach concentrates on Reading, Mathematics, Focus, Geography, Health, and Cultural Enrichment. We are a private home school institution with specific measurable goals. Our intentions are to not only prepare our children for excellence, but to also cultivate strong, moral, and PROUD characters. We want to promote an unyielding thirst for learning and develop well-esteemed youth.

19. School of Literacy #2, Chicago, IL. (http://www.schoolsofliteracy.org/index.html): A home school that is African centered in culture with a specific emphasis in higher level education and tutoring for toddlers through high school. We focus on developing and enhancing children intellectually, socially, and physically. We use different methods of teaching in order to best meet the learning style of children but aim for the same result: academic intensity through an African perspective.

20. Nkrumah International Academy, Chicago, IL (http://www.nkrumahlife.org/): Our purpose is to build African children to be exceptional, academically intense, driven and disciplined human beings. Our vision is to build a grand African that will display to the world a new type of leader with a global self-determined, politically whole and holistically substantial stake in his or her own global independence. We offer Pre-Law, Pre-Engineering, Pre-Med and Entrepreneurship Programs for what we call "college/life prep courses" to children grades 5-12. Our program is extremely unique and tailored specifically to African youth for their success in critical thinking, community building, and upholding our Code of Culture.

21. Heka Holistic Academy, Chicago, IL (http://www.hekacademy.org/): Our institution is an African centered home school, saturated in culture, with a specific emphasis in higher level education for adolescents aged four and five. We focus on developing and enriching children intellectually, socially, and physically. We use a multitude of teaching methods to suit the varying learning styles of our individual children. Ultimately, we aim for the same result: academic intensity and excellence through an African perspective.

22. Freedom Home Academy International, Detroit, MI (http://www.fhaintl-detroit.org/): Our institution is a home school that is African centered in culture with a specific emphasis in higher level education and tutoring for toddlers through high school. We focus on developing and enhancing children intellectually, socially, and physically. We use different methods of teaching in order to best meet the learning style of children but aim for the same result: academic intensity through an African perspective.

23. Timbuktu Academy of Science & Technology, Detroit, MI (https://www.timbuktuaCADEMy.org/): is a child-centered charter school that strives to nurture children and their families. Timbuktu was founded in 1997 and currently serves K-8th grade students. Mission is to involve the students, families, teachers and community in designing a holistic approach to learning, that provides students with a firm academic, applied scientific and moral educational experience, via a rigorous child-centered curriculum.

24. Paul Robeson Malcolm X Academy, Detroit, MI (http://detroitk12.org/schools/robesonmalcomx/): is the first public school program in the United States to provide an African-Centered curriculum. Offering grades PreK-8, the school was created to provide culturally responsive teaching techniques that prepare students both academically and socially to become productive citizens of the 21st Century. Through the African-Centered pedagogy, students are prioritized as the center of all learning and are educated on the contributions that African Americans made to the world.

25. Sankofa Academy, Houston, TX (http://www.sankofaacademy.org/): provides curriculum, professional development, and student services in an effort to transform the educational journey for students of color. The African Centered Curriculum Model developed by Sankofa Academy incorporates state-mandated objectives with an African centered perspective. The model incorporates multisensory activities to meet the needs of all learners.

26. Crispus Attucks High School, Indianapolis, IN (https://schools.miips.org/crispusattucks/): was the only high school in Indianapolis designated specifically for African-Americans; after the school’s construction blacks were not permitted to attend any other public high school in the city until integration of the schools became the law of the land. An all-black school had to be established in 1947, and the school was designated for students of color. The Afrikan Centered Curriculum Model developed by Sankofa Academy incorporates state-mandated objectives with an African centered perspective. The model incorporates multisensory activities to meet the needs of all learners.
27. African-Centered College Preparatory Academy, Kansas City, MO (https://www.kcpub-schoo ls.org/domain/1677): is a Signature School program within Southeast High School. AC Prep provides a unique college preparatory curriculum that is consistent with Kansas City Public Schools, but strives to exceed mandates and reach a higher level of expectation and challenge. AC Prep uses a culturally relevant approach, for scholars to develop leadership skills, social responsibility and personal life skills. Our program uses a rigorous curriculum ranging from 9-12th grade which emphasizes college prep, world languages and cultural foundations of drumming, art, drama, music, theater and dance.

28. Bertha Knox Gilkey Pamoja Preparatory Academy @ Cole Elementary School, St. Louis, MO (https://www.slps.org/pamoja): serves families with children in Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. We are one of 16 St. Louis Public Schools named in honor of African or Black people. Our school has the distinction of being named for two important figures in St. Louis’s history, Richard Hill Cole and Bertha Knox Gilkey. Gilkey Pamoja will be a global model of African-centered teaching and learning, a center and community of academic excellence and uncompromised expression to equip all students with a strong sense of personal development, personal identity, purpose, direction, and cultural identity.

29. Laurinburg Institute, Laurinburg, NC (https://laurinburginstitute.org/): is a unique educational institution concerned with the overall development of students. Since 1904, the Institute has educated thousands of students, primarily African-Americans. In the early 1900’s, Scotland County, located in the southeastern part of North Carolina, did not have a school for “colored” beyond the primary grades. So the Black citizens wrote Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee Institute to send someone to start a school. Not having anyone at Tuskegee at the time, he contacted Mr. William Edwards at Snow Hill Academy, and Emmanuel and Tinny McDuffie answered the call. They walked from Alabama to North Carolina and started the school on September 15, 1904 with 15 cents in the treasury.

30. Piney Woods School, Piney Woods, MS (http://www.pineywoods.org/): mission is to provide excellence in education within a Christian community through creation of an exceptional academic model which supports the tenet that all students can learn, develop a strong work ethic, and lead extraordinary lives through academic achievement and responsible citizenship, but might not have the opportunity to do so for financial or other reasons. The largest of only four historically African-American boarding schools left in the nation, The Piney Woods School was founded in 1909. Encompassing 2,000 acres, the campus includes a 500-acre instructional farm, five lakes, managed timberland, and Mississippi’s only rock garden amphitheatre.

31. Pine Forge Academy, Pine Forge, PA (http://www.pineforgeacademy.org/): a co-educational Seventh-day Adventist school, serves grades 9-12 and one of four African-American coed boarding academies. It is committed to providing a Christ-centered curriculum in a safe, caring environment to prepare students spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially for service to God and man. PFA offers its students a legacy of excellence through an environment of spiritual growth, academic achievement, and lifetime friendships. Faculty and staff embrace the history of an institution that reflects the ideals of civil rights and equality, providing an opportunity to excel for all of its students.

32. Imhotep Institute Charter High School, Philadelphia, PA (https://www.imhotephigh-school.com/home.html): High student academic achievement is the primary goal of Imhotep Institute. Our underlying philosophy is that a rigorous, integrative, constructivist curriculum, combined with the historical and cultural richness of our African heritage, will result in well-rounded and productive citizens. We believe that an African Centered educational program will provide the environment needed for many of our urban learners. Imhotep Institute is a culturally-responsive school with connections to many community organizations and resources.

33. Woodbine Academy, Philadelphia, PA (http://www.woodbineacademy.com/home/): is a private academic school established to provide an effective learning environment for children in the elementary grades K-5th. It’s continuing pursuit of excellence and service to the community of thirty years, Woodbine has quietly emerged as one of the city’s outstanding private elementary schools. Many of the parents attribute the school’s achievements and measure its quality of education by the strengths of its administration.

34. The Lotus Academy, Philadelphia, PA (www.lotusacademy.org/): is independent, private school that was founded in 1974 and has operated since that time on the basis of one primary objective: creating an academically superior and culturally affirming institution that develops future leaders, life-long learners, and world citizens. The focus of the Lotus Academy program is on laying a strong foundation for the proper academic, cultural, and social development of its students. It consists of a state-licensed day care for kindergarten and pre-kindergarten children, a Lower School for grades one through four, and an Upper School for grades five through eight.

35. Nubian Village Academy, Richmond, VA (https://www.nvastem.org/): is a 501(c)3 non-profit that was founded in the fall of 2001 serving Pre-K to 8th grade. The mission was to arm each student with an education that will engage the whole student and promote a lifetime of learning through an education that is academically challenging and culturally relevant. Over the years, we saw an increase in the need to create a pipeline of underrepresented students, interested in pursuing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). In 2009, we started a Pre College Initiative (PCI) of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) to fulfill our goal to stimulate interest in STEM and to enhance students academic performance, technical, and leadership skills.

36. Zion Preparatory Academy, Seattle, WA (http://www.zionprep.org/): mission is to ensure academic excellence in a supportive Afrocentric, Christian-based environment. Students will realize their fullest potential, achieve personal integrity, and become responsible contributing members of society. The curriculum is based on our philosophy of early childhood education: High quality early childhood education meets the total needs of the individual child. Children learn best in a positive stimulating environment designed to enhance their self-confidence and self esteem with parents as important partners with us in their child’s care and education.

37. The Garvey School/Egun Omoode Shule, Trenton, NJ (http://www.thegarveyschool.org/): seeks strong families that are committed to strengthening their educational and cultural awareness. As an African-centered school, our focus is on the education of the entire family, not just the child. A child centered curriculum breeds individualism which has not helped our
communities, our largely Black communities to be self-sufficient and thriving neighborhoods. As we teach, we incorporate everyone involved in the nurturing of the child so we can learn and grow collectively, thus practicing the Nguzo Saba principle of Ujima (collective work and responsibility) to build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems, and to solve them together.

38. NationHouse, Washington, D.C. (http://www.nationhouse.org/): was founded in July, 1974 and grew out of the student activism of Howard University community in the late 1960s. We are one of the oldest independent Afrikan centered schools in the United States and in the DC metropolitan area serving the specific needs of children of Afrikan heritage from pre-school to twelfth grade. Today, NationHouse continues to serve families in the development and enculturation of responsible youth who are committed to their families, their community and their Afrikan culture/heritage.

39. Roots Activity Learning Center, Washington, D.C. (http://www.rootsactivitylc.org/home.html): was founded in 1977 by Dr. Bernida Thompson with the philosophy that exposure is the key to intelligence. Roots is an independent educational institution serving the specific needs of children of African heritage. In 1999, the community asked Dr. Thompson to open another Roots as a charter school. Therefore, Roots Public Charter School was born as a protégé of the Roots Activity Learning Center.

40. The Ideal Academy of Education, Washington, D.C. (http://idealacademy.org/): The Associates for Ideal Education (AIE) was incorporated June 5, 1981. Its stated purpose is to "provide for the educational needs of youth and adults through holistic methods and to establish and operate schools or programs to fulfill this purpose." The program grew out of the vision of Paulette Jones Bell-Imaan, founder of the then three year-old Ideal Learning Center, a tutorial and enrichment after school and Saturday program. In the summer of 1981, AIE created, designed and operated the L.I.F.T. Reading and Math Summer Day Camp, the first of its kind in the metropolitan area. In 1999 the Associates for Ideal Education under the direction of Paulette Jones-Imaan developed a successful bid to open the Ideal Academy Public Charter School. IAPCS currently offers Ideal Education to more than three hundred students in northwest D.C.

41. Ujamaa School, Washington, D.C. (https://www.ujamaaschool.net/): is an independent Afrikan private school. We empower students from preschool through high school by emphasizing Culture, Academic Excellence and Character Development and practice our Afrikan Culture with Conscious Responsibility, Determination, Commitment & Loyalty. On May 4, 1968 Ujamaa School opened with 3 students in preschool and added a grade each year up through high school. Ujamaa School is an ungraded school system. He chose that system because it allowed him to move students according to their ability. Ujamaa School is the first and oldest Afrikan independent school in the USA. In the last 40 years many students have graduated from high school, some as early as age 14.
The purpose of this study was to investigate the educational experiences of African/African ancestry students in Santa Clara County, CA.

The research was conducted using Tillman’s Culturally Sensitive Research Framework: culturally congruent research methods, culturally specific knowledge, cultural resistance to theoretical dominance, culturally sensitive data interpretations, and culturally informed theory and practice.

This research is culturally sensitive because it uses the cultural standpoints of both the research participants and the researchers as a framework for the research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation, as well as reporting back to the community (dissemination of the findings).

INQUIRY DOMAIN I
African/African Ancestry Community Members’
Definition(s) of Quality Education

What the Assessment Tells Us

Some members of the community hold assimilationist views. Others value cultural affirmation. These are differing responses to the cultural dislocation of mis-education and white supremacy racism.

There is no single story or definition of quality education or belief about students’ access to quality education. The various definitions of quality education range from one that is totally focused on achieving academic qualifications that allow for career goals to be achieved to one that is also culturally centered in African ideals, traditions, and history and allow for individual understanding and appreciation of self as a strong, valuable individual in society.

In all of the instances the definitions and beliefs relate to community and parent involvement in the education process, and the valuing of Black educators, administrators and parents’ roles in the creation of a collective that benefits AA students’ academic, cultural, social, and psychological development and well-being.

Stage in career, educational and personal experiences, and status in the community play an integral part in the adult participants’ definitions and beliefs.

Joyce E. King, Ph.D.
Linda C. Tillman, Ph.D.
Education Assessment & Research Project

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**DOMAIN II**

Barriers in the Education System: Considering African/African Ancestry Students’ Learning Styles via a Cultural Lens Perspective

What the Education Assessment Tells Us

- Educators often view parental engagement from a deficit perspective and researchers fail to acknowledge race and racism as factors in teachers’ and scholars’ perceptions of students’ experiences.

- Trauma-informed instruction is becoming increasingly important as a focus for professional development and school-based intervention; however, the fact that these approaches fail to identify racism as a form of trauma, can result in such interventions actually creating barriers to meeting the needs of African/African Ancestry students.

- Expulsions and suspensions of young children, especially boys, can be linked to misdiagnosis and over-representation of these children in special education and pernicious labeling of children as “bad,” when educators are not adequately trained to recognize and respond to their more active and relational learning styles and behavioral responses to race-based trauma that African/African ancestry children and youth may display. Research documents such racial bias among pre-school teachers.

- Participants identified numerous barriers such as: the number of African/African Ancestry educators, inability to access resources and services, and lack of cultural representation in the school curriculum and the K-12 institutions, and poor communication between groups. These barriers are closely linked to the demographics of the county, specifically, the change over the years, and the economic context.

- Respondents affirmed that African/African Ancestry students gain a sense of worth and are shown care beyond the classroom when they are taught by African/African Ancestry teachers.

Joyce E. King, Ph.D.
Linda C. Tillman, Ph.D.

What do you think the Cartoonist is saying here? Are you aware of anything like this happening in classrooms in Santa Clara County?

What needs to be done?
The purpose of this study was to investigate the educational experiences of African/African Ancestry students in Santa Clara County, CA. The research was conducted using Tillman’s Culturally Sensitive Research Framework: culturally congruent research methods, culturally specific knowledge, cultural resistance to theoretical dominance, culturally sensitive data interpretations, and culturally informed theory and practice. This research is culturally sensitive because it uses the cultural standpoints of both the research participants and the researchers as a framework for the research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation, as well as reporting back to the community.

**DOMAIII

**Policies That Hinder African/African Ancestry Student Success

**What the Education Assessment Tells Us

Respondents indicate that the Santa Clara County Schools should implement and enforce policies that specifically address African/African Ancestry students. Several policies were found to be especially important:

- **Discipline.** Almost 60% of adults and 59% of parent respondents agree that “school discipline policies are administered unfairly in Santa Clara County” and that these policies are harming African/African ancestry children and youth.

- **Parent Engagement.** Respondents overwhelmingly agree that the education of their children is a real priority for African/African ancestry parents in the Santa Clara County community.

- **Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Promotion of African/African Ancestry Educators.** The majority of respondents agree that more African/African ancestry educators are needed in Santa Clara County schools.

For example, 30% of parents indicate that their child/children had never had an African/African ancestry teacher, while only 26% indicate that their child/children had been taught by at least one African/African ancestry teacher.

- **Racism and Discrimination.** The majority of adult respondents in all categories indicate that African/African Ancestry students are more often subjected to racism and discrimination and that there should be specific policies that address this issue (e.g., professional development of teachers and administrators). Parent education for advocacy in this area is also needed.

- **Curriculum.** California’s newly established requirement for teaching Ethnic Studies will require attention to curriculum development and teachers’ professional development in order to implement this new law.

Joyce E. King, Ph.D.
Linda C. Tillman, Ph.D.

What do you think the Cartoonist is saying here?

Are students learning this history in Santa Clara County Schools? Are teachers prepared to teach this history?
EDUCATION ASSESSMENT & RESEARCH PROJECT

● The purpose of this study was to investigate the educational experiences of African/African ancestry students in Santa Clara County, CA.

● The research was conducted using Tillman’s Culturally Sensitive Research Framework: culturally congruent research methods, culturally specific knowledge, cultural resistance to theoretical dominance, culturally sensitive data interpretations, and culturally informed theory and practice.

● This research is culturally sensitive because it uses the cultural standpoints of both the research participants and the researchers as a framework for the research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation, as well as reporting back to the community (dissemination of the findings).

DOMAIN IV
Racism and Discrimination

What the Education Assessment Tells Us

Theme #1: Educators’ low expectations adversely affect African/African ancestry students.

● Eighty-one percent of parents, 70% of adults, 66% of parents of young children, and 20% of youth agree that teachers in the Santa Clara County schools set low expectations for African/African Ancestry students.

Theme #2: Curriculum issues are implicated in the under-achievement of African/African ancestry students.

● Sixty-seven percent of parents, 93% of adults, 78% of parent of young children, and 63% of youth who responded to questionnaires indicated that it is important that African/African Ancestry students see themselves in the curriculum.

Theme #3: African/African Ancestry students experience the absence of protection from racism and discrimination by school personnel (teachers, administrators, etc.).

● Nearly 87% of adults and 77% of parents of young children agreed with the statement “I am concerned that teachers and school officials do not protect my children from racial discrimination at school/child care.”

Theme #4: Santa Clara County school teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel need professional development to understand and respond effectively in culturally informed ways to the educational experiences of African/African Ancestry students and impacts of racial trauma in their lives.

● Sixty-seven percent of the parents, 69% of the adults, and 94% of the parents of young children agree that it is important for educators to understand “the specific academic experiences of boys and girls of African/African Ancestry,” as well as the “traumatic experiences of African/African Ancestry students.”

Joyce E. King, Ph.D.
Linda C. Tillman, Ph.D.

Have you heard of Implicit bias? Have you heard of Dysconscious (dis-conscious) racism? What can be done about these problems?