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Academic Success of African American Males in the Blount County, Tennessee: Perceptions of  
the Community

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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by

Keri C. Prigmore

May 2013

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Dr. Virginia Foley, Chair

Dr. Daryl Carter

Dr. Eric Glover

Dr. Don Good

Keywords: African American Education, Black Students, Gender Studies

## ABSTRACT

Academic Success of African American Males in the Blount County, Tennessee: Perceptions of the Community

by

Keri Charnelle Prigmore

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in the Blount County Area. More specifically, the study was focused on the perception of the participants concerning noncognitive, demographic, and institutional variables associated with the academic success of African-American males. The participants for this study were attendees of four local churches: Mount Pleasant A.M.E. Zion, Rest Haven Missionary Baptist Church, St. John Missionary Baptist Church, and St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church. Each of the four churches is located in Blount County, Tennessee. Participants were male and female adults of varied ages and ethnic classifications but were all familiar with the focus area.

Research supported the suggestion that both cognitive and noncognitive variables contribute to the academic success of African American males in the Blount County Area. The data were collected and analyzed using a 27-question survey measured on a 5 point Likert scale. The last section of the survey instrument was composed of 3 open-ended questions. Seven research questions served as the bases for this study and the data were analyzed using a series of single-sample *t* tests. Results indicated that participants agreed that noncognitive, demographic, and institutional factors are contributors to the academic success of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee.

## DEDICATION

Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthen me"

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, especially...

to my Husband Quincy for your encouragement and sacrifices during this educational endeavor

to Shayla and Junior for inspiring me to be an example for them as they begin their educational journey

to my parents, G. Dexter and Marjorie Stewart for motivating me to conquer all challenges

to my brother Carl for being an example of a successful African American male raised in the Blount County, Tennessee

to Nana, the Hall, Harris, James, and White families for their willingness to help when needed

to loved ones who have made the journey to life everlasting: Grandparents (Carl and Kathleene Lockett), Grandfather (Fred Stewart), Aunt (Carol Blevins), and Uncle (Michael Stewart)

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Many other individuals contributed to and supported this research and I would like to acknowledge their contributions. I offer a special thanks to Dr. Virginia Foley for serving as the chair of this dissertation committee and also for providing encouragement, guidance, and helpful insight throughout the entire process. I would like to thank Dr. Eric Glover, Dr. Donald Good, and Dr. Daryl Carter for graciously agreeing to be members of this dissertation committee. I extend a gracious thanks to Betty Ann Proffitt, Joanna Wicker, and the faculty of the ELPA department for their continued support during this process.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The underachievement, lack of inclusion, and backward progression of African American men within the American society, and particularly within the educational arena, has once again surfaced as a trend that demands immediate attention. However, the challenges of reversing the negative circumstances facing African American men require transforming a broad array of social, political, and economical, psychological, and educational issues that are deeply rooted in the very power structure of America. On the one hand, that society espouses rhetoric of concern and desire to elevate Black males, but on the other hand, practices a policy of oppression, prejudice, and disregard. Put differently, the experience of the Black man in America seems to be one in which he is called “mister” but is treated with a “niggardly” regard. And the result is the positioning of Black males at the lower rungs of society and their experiencing underachievement in almost all aspects of life (Jenkins, 2006, p. 127).

Despite the efforts of reform processes, the ability of public school systems to adequately serve black males is worsening (Donnor & Shockley, 2010). American males are in a state of crisis (Lewis, Simon, Uzzell, & Horwitz, 2010). Black males are not exposed to the same opportunities as their Caucasian counterparts. In almost every facet of life they are faced with adversity that most often results in “unfulfilled potential and too many fractured lives” (Lewis et al., 2010, p. 4).

The educational state of African American males is not a new phenomenon, but there has been relatively little work that focuses on their academics. Education institutions must address the low achievement of African American males and develop an understanding of the relationship between “low educational attainment and incarceration” (Donnor & Shockley, 2010, p. 44). In an analysis conducted by the African American Men of Arizona State University (AAMASU) Program it was suggested that African American males experience higher levels of academic underachievement, higher rates of participation in criminal activity and unemployment,

and more fatalities caused by homicide (Hotep, 2008). The educational system has become another entity that serves as a structure of disenfranchisement for African American males (Jenkins, 2006). To change the perception of Black males in educational organizations school districts have an important task of evaluating the educational needs of African-American males and developing an atmosphere of high academic expectations and cultural diversity (Hopkins, 1997).

The efforts to address the underachievement and backwards progression of Black Males in American society and the educational arena have been disconnected and uncoordinated (Jenkins, 2006). This situation requires coordinated national attention (Lewis et al, 2010).

#### Statement of Problem

This purpose of this study was to investigate factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee. More specifically, the study focused on the perception of the participants concerning noncognitive, demographic, and institutional variables associated with the academic success of African American males. Identifying and analyzing the factors that positively affect the academic performance of African American males is a critical step in advancing them toward educational equality (Children's Aid Society, 2008).

Of the five million young African American males in the United States, schools graduate only 42% of those who enter into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2010). In addition to the disparities in achievement levels and graduation rates, overrepresentation in disciplinary proceedings and special education classes contribute to the miseducation of African American males (Children's Defense Fund, 2007). Even though Black students comprise only 17% of public schools, 41% of students are placed in special education programs are African

American. Eighty-five percent of the African American students placed in special education programs are Black males (Wynn, 2010).

Overall, the results analyzed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2011) indicated that 18% of fourth grade African Americans met the level of proficiency in mathematics which was 29% lower than White students. In the content area of reading, 19% of African American students in the fourth grade were proficient or advanced which was 25% lower than the performance of White students (Reports: The National Report Card). According to the results of the 2011 NAEP mathematics assessment, 15% of African American students met the proficiency levels, which was 28% lower than White students. In the content area of reading, 16% of African American students in the eighth grade were proficient which was 21% lower than White student (Reports: The National Report Card).

In the state of Tennessee, 12% of African American students met the eighth grade reading proficiency level which was 22% lower than their White counterparts. In the fourth grade 11% of African American students were proficient in reading which was 20% lower than White students (Reports: The National Report Card, 2011).

In mathematics, 13% of fourth grade African American students were proficient, which was 38% lower than fourth grade White students. Ten percent of eighth grade African Americans were proficient or advanced on the 2011 NAEP mathematics assessment which was 24% lower than the performance of White students (Reports: The National Report Card).

Results of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) indicated that 77% of African American students in the state of Tennessee performed below proficiency in mathematics and 64.3% were below proficiency in reading on the 2011 T-CAP (TN Department of Education, 2011). Tennessee high school achievement data indicated that 60.9% of African

American Students did not meet the state mandated proficiency level in mathematics and 48.1% were below proficiency in reading on the 2011 state assessment (TN Department of Education, 2011).

In the Blount County area the highest percent proficient for African Americans on the 2011 T-CAP was 34% in mathematics and 39% in reading/language arts (TN Department of Education, 2011). For high school adequate yearly progress indicators the highest proficient or above level for African Americans were 78% in mathematics and 74% in reading/language arts (TN Department of Education, 2011).

Little progress has been made in addressing the educational challenges facing men of color in recent years. Despite efforts toward addressing the educational inequalities it is apparent that the current educational trends will drastically lower the educational level of America's workforce (Denbo & Beaulieu, 2002). Data suggested that this decline will be most noticeable by 2020 which is the year that President Barack Obama has set as the deadline for the United States to become the first country in the world with the greatest number of young adults earning a postsecondary degree (Rodgers, 2006). Measures to avoid further decline in our global standing and find a means to break this cycle should be determined. The challenge lies in finding a way to adequately support young Black males in their educational career. Society needs to develop an infrastructure that will encourage them to become successful contributors and allow them to reach their full academic potential (Children's Aid Society, 2008).

### Research Questions

This study was focused on factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males. The following research questions guided this study.

1. To what extent do the participants perceive that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed?
2. To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior?
3. To what extent do the participants perceive that when compared to Caucasian males African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success?
4. To what extent do the participants perceive that it possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups?
5. To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between noncognitive variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males?
6. To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between demographic variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males?
7. To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between institutional variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males?

#### Significance of Study

This purpose of this study was to measure the perception of factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee. More specifically, the study was focused on the perception of the participants concerning noncognitive, demographic, and institutional variables associated with the academic success of African-American males.

The importance of this study is centered on the negative images of African American males that continue to reinforce societal stereotypes surrounding their low academic ability. Black males are portrayed in ways that reinforce the ideals of white superiority and black inferiority (Rome, 2004). Television series and daily newspaper articles serve as an example of how society's depiction of African American men is that of a menace to society. Continuous portrayal of Black males in mass media has a negative impact on both African Americans and White Americans, Television has evolved into a sophisticated, black-faced minstrel show that continues to manipulate the minds of American society and support the negative perception of the intelligence of an African American male (Watson, 2009). Exposure to these media outlets has inadvertently convinced young black males to perpetuate these negative actions (Powell, 2008).

Historically, the academic achievement of African American males has been an important educational issue in our country. Even with significant gains in educational reform programs for African American students, the 1990s indicated a decline in the progress that caused a significant widening of the achievement gap (White, 2009). Low achievement among African American youth was once attributed to economic status and considered a problem confined to urban areas. Data show that low achievement of African American students crosses all socioeconomic groups. The academic performance of children from wealthy African American families does not reach the level of achievement made by wealthy white families (Zernike, 2000). Academic findings such as the previous support the notion of genetics as a reason for black-white achievement gap.

In the 60s Dr. William Shockley, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, inventor, and physicist, talked of the "genetic inferiority" of African Americans in terms of academic achievement. Dr.



Shockley's message was that Black people cannot meet the same level of academic achievement as Whites and this is caused by genetic inheritance (Welsing, 1974). Advocates of this theory argue that African Americans possess a genetic characteristic that predispose them to low academic ability (Gabbidon, Greene, & Young, 2002). The genetic inferiority theory has been criticized for its inability to provide evidence of a specific gene that causes intellectual inferiority and its use to explain social problems across various ethnic and racial groups (Gabbidon et al., 2002). . Regardless of its criticisms, Dr. Shockley's theory continues to replenish the white supremacy complex through the degradation of African Americans.

Shockley was not alone in his attempt to conduct research supporting the intellectual inferiority of African Americans. Jensen's work encouraged the idea that certain groups were genetically inferior to others (Belgrave, 2010). Jensen suggested that intelligence was determined at birth and genetics accounted for 80% of one's intellectual ability. The remaining 20% was developed by the environment and social support.

Intellectual ability should not be viewed as a fixed, unchangeable trait. This tends to lead to a pattern of helplessness that is characterized by a lack of motivation and willingness to persevere (Hwang, 2012). Instead, African American males need to develop an incremental approach to learning that will lessen their vulnerability to debilitating stereotypes on achievement (Fuligni, 2007).

Society needs to change the message being transmitted to African American males. We must emphasize that all students can learn: we should not make the assumption that only White students are capable of academic success (US Black Engineer, 1987). The disparities in educational achievement should be erased so that African American students will have the courage and determination needed to achieve academically.

It is important to understand the variables that impact the educational needs of African American males (Hale, 2001). When there is a successful integration of noncognitive, demographic, and institutional variable, it will serve as a structural model to promote minority education (Abi-Nader, 1993).

It is not the influence of one variable that has encouraged the underachievement of African American males; rather, it is a combination of factors at work. Communities, schools, families, and policymakers are all contributors to the educational crisis of Black males (Denbo & Beaulieu, 2002). An adequate manipulation of variables associated with academic success will develop engaging learning environments and provide motivation.

#### Delimitations

The following characteristics serve as delimitations for the scope of this study:

1. This study focused only on the academic achievement of African American males.
2. The participants surveyed were Blount County, Tennessee residents of more than 5 years and were knowledgeable about the demographics of Blount County, including the cities of Alcoa and Maryville.
3. The researcher had predetermined certain variables to limit the scope of this study.

#### Limitations

The following characteristics serve as limitations to the application and interpretation of this study:

1. The noncognitive, demographic, and institutional factors about which the respondents were surveyed may not be considered contributing factors to all participants and result in failure to answer all questions.

2. The number of participants who choose to respond may negatively impact the study.
3. The data derived from this study were obtained from one region: therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other areas.
4. As a member of the African American racial group, my direct connection to the topic may encourage researcher bias.

### Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used throughout the process.

Academic achievement – the ability to meet the academic standards set by local, state, and federal educational institutions; including positive interaction in extra-curricular and other social activities.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) – the performance benchmark set for minority student that is predetermined by the Department of Education.

African American Males – American males of African descent. The term African American, Black, Black Americans, and Black males, may be used interchangeably according to the source.

Blount County Area – the geographical area in Tennessee that includes Alcoa, Maryville, and Blount County School districts.

Caucasian – American males of European ancestry. The terms Caucasian and White are used interchangeably throughout the study.

Cognitive variables - factors that are associated with academic development. The cognitive variables discussed in this study are teacher expectation, teacher-pupil relationship, parental involvement, teacher evaluation, and academic intervention programs.

Discrimination –the unjust treatment of a group of people based on their ethnic classification.

Noncognitive variables – factors that are not academic. The noncognitive variables discussed in this study are self-esteem, motivation, racial identification, and participation in extracurricular activities.

### Overview of Study

This study was organized to include five chapters. Chapter 1 is composed of the introduction, the statement of problem, the research questions, the significance of study, delimitations, limitations, definition of terms, and an overview of the study. Chapter 2 is the review of literature that contains an analysis of information supporting the research questions. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used to conduct the study. Chapter 4 is a presentation of the data analysis and findings. Chapter 5 elaborates on the findings and provides a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*Young black males are in a crisis in this country. Instead of addressing the problem, society has created entire prison industries out of our misery”* (The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center, 2010, p. 9).

#### School to Prison Pipeline

Over the years, criminal activity data sources have highlighted a large racial difference among Black and White males. The disparity of contacts with the criminal justice system includes arrests, encounters with authorities, and convictions. The rate of African American male criminal reporting continues to overshadow that of Whites (Piquero, 2008). African American juveniles represent 31% of the 4,302 children arrested each day (Chappell, 2008; Children’s Defense Fund, 2011). The confinement rate of African American males is so high that a black male born in 2010 will have a 1 in 3 chance of involvement with the juvenile justice system (Chappell, 2008). Zero tolerance measures have inadvertently criminalized African American males, “leading them from the classroom to the cellblock” (Rossatto & Allen, 2006, p. 63). Racial disparities run through every system that directly impact a child’s ability to reach success in life. Educational organizations that have implemented harsh discipline policies including expulsion and suspension discourage students and guide them into juvenile detention and adult prison (Children's Defense Fund, 2007). The school-to-prison pipeline describes the intersection of the K-12 education and the juvenile justice system resulting from a failure to meet the educational and social needs of at-risk students. The pipeline is a symbol of the failure of public institutions to fulfill the responsibility of meeting the social and educational needs of a large population of children they are charged with serving (Kim & Lawson, 2010).

Studies indicate that African American males are less likely than their White counterparts to receive a challenging education (Kim & Lawson, 2010). When one group is disadvantaged from birth certain factors place them at an educational disadvantage; they perform lower on state mandated tests, they are more likely to develop behavioral problems in an attempt to compensate for lower academic ability or to gain social acceptance (Evans, 2002). These factors and unfair school discipline practices tend to push Black males towards prison (NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Inc., 2005).

A 2010 report released by the Advancement Project suggested that high stakes tests and severe zero-tolerance policies in public education have created a school-to-prison pipeline for many students of color (Youth United for Change & Advancement Project, 2011). Disadvantaged students are being forced out of the public education system by failure to meet state mandated benchmark scores and harsh punishments for their misbehavior (Kim & Lawson, 2010). The report states, "across the country there have been dramatic increases in the use of lengthy out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, referrals to alternative schools, referrals to law enforcement and school-based arrests" (Youth United for Change & Advancement Project, 2011, p. 5). The school systems with the greatest police presence have a higher rate of minority contact with the legal system. These schools tend to be located in low socioeconomic, minority communities and the disproportionality in student discipline referrals offers students of color less than an adequate education (Chappell, 2008). As a result, many of those youth have a negative view of school and make the decision to drop out. Statistics have shown that 52% of African American males who are high school dropouts had entered the criminal justice system by age 30 (Western & Schiraldi, 2003).

Research has rarely linked discipline procedures to high stakes testing but the Advancement Project writers contended that they are connected factors in forcing students out of the public education system (Youth United for Change & Advancement Project, 2011). A major effect of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was the passing of state tests as a prerequisite for graduation (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Unfortunately, not only are some of the test questions biased, but the limited access to adequate study materials and qualified teachers have caused those tests to be discriminatory (Donnor & Shockley, 2010). In many states students who fail to meet the mandated performance levels of these tests fail to advance grades, and being held back is one of the greatest predictors of students dropping out of high school (Dryfoos, 1990).

There is a move to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The first step is to examine current school policies and practices and evaluate their effectiveness. Data have suggested the majority of current school discipline policies are counterproductive and lack the necessary pedagogical foundation (NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Inc., 2005). Kim and Lawson (2012) suggested the following policies for educational organizations to implement and enforce as a means to address the overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal justice system.

1. Advance the right to remain in school, promote a safe and supportive school environment for all children, and enable them to complete school
2. Limit exclusion from and disruption of students' regular educational programs as a response to disciplinary problems
3. Provide full procedural protections, including the opportunity to have representation by counsel in proceedings to exclude students from their regular education program, appropriate procedures of due process in other school disciplinary processes, and

implementing disciplinary procedures in a fair, nondiscriminatory, and culturally responsive manner.

4. Reduce criminalization of truancy, disability-related behavior, and other school-related conduct.
5. Establish programs and procedures to assist parents, caregivers, guardians, students, and their legal representatives in understanding and exercising student rights to remain in school. (p. 32)

In 2007 59% of Tennessee's juveniles placed into detention centers were African American (Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, 2007). In the same year 80% of the juveniles who transferred to adult detention facilities were African American (Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, 2007). The reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974 required states to address the overrepresentation of minority youth in confinement (Burfeind, 2011). States are required to determine where the problems exist and implement strategies to eliminate them. The purpose of the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is to ensure that minority youth are given equitable treatment before and after contact with the juvenile justice system. Blount County is one of the six areas that focus on minority youth in their communities (Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, 2007). The Blount County DMC Task Force seeks to maintain its mission by implementing preventative programs for youth of color (Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, 2007).



## Exposure to a Positive Role Model

Wynn (as cited in Miller, 2008) wrote:

The tragic plight of African American males in regard to low academic performance, high school graduation, and college enrollment together with the incarceration, and gang involvement requires a strategic response. African American males mentoring other African American males is one of the critical strategies that is required. In fact, it may be the most important strategies in ensuring the successful development and maturation of young African-American males into a generation of men who will be loving fathers to their children, faithful husbands to their wives, and leaders for their community (p. 5).

As we go through life, we meet many different people. We offer some of those people power over our lives: allowing them to influence our choices, change our thinking about topics, and alter the ways in which we perceive ourselves. These people impact the way we view the world, others, and ourselves. This influence has the potential to last a lifetime (Bacon, 2011).

When a person impacts our lives in a positive manner that individual is considered a role model. They have the power to have a long lasting effect on our lives. Role models can be found at any stage of life and from any avenue of contact. However, role models can serve as both a positive or negative influence. Someone who displays negative behaviors shows children ways in which not to conduct themselves. Negative role models usually have poor academic performance and make bad social choices. Sadly, not every person will find a positive role model in their home, classroom, or community (Fashola, 2005).

Social researchers have documented the importance of role models in the development of young people's goals and future success (Spearman, 2010). Modeling has been discussed as an appropriate means of assisting African American boys who are having difficulty with academic achievement (Davis, 2005). Most research surrounding this topic focuses on role models as an important source for behavior (Spearman, 2010). The Social Learning Theory is rooted in

behaviorism and occurs when an individual learns an action or behavior by observing another person (Quinn, 2000). Introduced by Bandura (1977) social learning is a theory that emphasizes imitation and observation as the primary means of development (Siegler, DeLoache, & Eisenberg, 2011). Bandura (1977) argued that most learning is social in nature and based on observation.

Many children look to celebrities and other public figures as a guide for success, but our televisions and movie screens do not always feature stories of successful African American men (Spearman, 2010). Unfortunately, society places a great amount of accuracy and importance on the stories told by news broadcasters. Even though research suggests a decline in movie attendance, Americans spent more than 4 billion dollars at the movie theaters in 2007 (Tryon, 2009). We spend over half of our day watching television (Spearman, 2010). Most of these media outlets are saturated with negative images of African American males (Walker, 2011). Images of gang bangers, drug dealers, deadbeat dads, college dropouts, and violent criminals are frequent and reoccurring ratings boosters. It was not until he portrayed a dirty narcotics officer in *Training Day* that Denzel Washington's peers deemed him worthy of receiving the Best Actor award. These images intensify society's stereotypes about African American males and it deepens the roots of inadequacy in their lives (Jenkins, 2006). "These students and groups learn to become distrustful of the educational process, viewing it less as an opportunity for social advancement and more as an instrument of the dominate culture designed to rob them of their unique cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms" (Ford, 2011, p. 219).

Some African American males have not had an advocate in their lives encouraging them to achieve. African American males represent 3.65% of the students enrolled in gifted and talented programs (Bonner & Jennings, 2007). They do not have "mentors established a

relationship that communicates that “we are all in this together” and “you are talented” (Hughes, 2010, p. 57). More importantly, race-matched role models provide more concrete information regarding what is attainable for them as members of specific ethnic groups (Stephens, 2012). Young people learn the racial structure of a culture by observing the actions of adults in different professions (Sanchez, 2005). Matched role models provide an understanding that people belonging to my racial group can grow up and be successful (Sanchez, 2005).

### Understanding the Oppositional Culture Theory

Many organizations focus their efforts on addressing the educational status of African Americans. But few have offered adequate, nonracist explanations for the underrepresentation of African Americans in higher educational programs.

The oppositional culture theory is a concept used to explain the dynamics of racial group differences (Mocombe, 2010). Developed by Nigerian American Anthropologist John Ogbu (2008), the Oppositional Culture Theory is an exploration of the differences in academic ability between minority and nonminority groups. The Oppositional Culture Theory is based on two components used to explain racial differences in achievement: (1) societal and school influences and (2) individual and community influences.

The first factor describes the unfair treatment of minority groups (Harris, 2008). Ogbu noted that minorities are systematically denied adequate access to educational resources equal to those offered to nonminority groups (as cited in Harris, 2008). Minorities also face barriers that hinder success in future employment opportunities (Ogbu, 2008). Because of racial discrimination and organizational inequalities, minority advancement is hindered by the *job ceiling* (Valentine, 1989). This constant exposure to racial injustice can be a discouraging factor

to minorities that leads into the second component of the Oppositional Culture Theory (Harris, 2008).

When minorities encounter barriers within an organizational structure, they develop a perception that despite their efforts they will receive fewer rewards than the dominate groups (Harris, 2008). This perception allows the development of an internal force characterized as resisting educational goals (Ogbu, 2008). Ogbu described this resistance as a cultural inversion where minorities define certain behaviors as inappropriate because they are the suggested behaviors of their oppressors. These actions may be referred to as ‘acting white’ and may be negatively sanctioned by peers (Lundy, 2005). African American students who were perceived as ‘acting white’, may be excluded from social activities or ridiculed by classmates (Ogbu, 2008).

Peer culture among African American youth may oppose academic achievement and instead reward nonconformity (Ferguson, 2001). In an attempt to maintain their identity many Black males have claimed negative behaviors as a part of their culture. For instance, African American males who were perceived as low achievers , who did not follow the rules, or did not try hard were viewed as cool and were more likely to be respected by their Caucasian male peers (Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998).

### Cultural Identity and Self-Image

African-Americans are the only race in American culture that has been the focus of unprecedented levels of unrestrained and unregulated violence (West, 1993). No other ethnic group has been taught to systematically hate themselves through terrorist acts such as lynching, Jim Crow Laws, and the slave trade (West, 1993).

Skin color has a large impact on lives of African Americans, and the impacts can be traced back to the antebellum period (McShane, 2007). Racism contributes to the “devaluing of historical and cultural identities” of African Americans. “The lack of consistently seeing cultural representations of oneself in social positions of power” encourages people to believe they are not capable of attaining such positions, which is the bases of internalized racism (Neville, 2009, p. 166). Some Black children will experience fewer encounters of overt racism because of their social class, economic status, or place of residence. Unfortunately, there is not an escape from the racist subtleties of today’s society.

Acts of racism and negative racial attitudes communicate to children in both subtle and overt manners. In an era where institutionalized racism is illegal the subtle forms of racism and race consciousness are potentially the most dangerous (Hopson, 1990). The psychological development of African American children is greatly influenced by prejudice, racial segregation, and discrimination (Poussaint, 1974). Black children are born into this world as victims of factors beyond their control. In the perception of white society, physical characteristics such as wooly hair and dark skin are less desirable than white skin and straight hair.

As Black parents we are always juggling several balls in the air. On the one hand, we’re trying to teach our children that if they study hard and are good citizens and human beings, they can have successful careers in all areas of life like so many accomplished Blacks before them. On the other hand, we know that because they are Black and often stereotyped as lazy, intellectually inferior, and criminally inclined, the road to success for children will not always be simple or easy. Because of the color of their skin, internal and external obstacles will block their paths to success if they do not know how to move the obstacles or go around it. (Ladner & DiGeronimo, 2003, p. 1)

Even though the color caste system continues to have a significant impact on black children’s view of their future success and self-image, many motivated parents and individuals fight to instill pride in the race (Poussaint, 1974).

The interacting effect of race on research findings focused on the relationship of delinquency and self-esteem was not measured in early studies. Ross (1994) included group identity measures as he studied the effects of race and self-esteem on delinquency. Ross placed high importance on distinguishing between “different measures of self-esteem from different racial background” (p. 111). Weiten, Dunn, and Hammer (2012) reference the meta-analysis conducted by Twenge and Crocker. Their study explained the low self-esteem of African Americans using a concept they termed *internalized stigma*. Internalized stigma is the suggestion that if society has a negative perception of the group in which I belong, then I should have a negative self-image because I internalized those perceptions in my identity (Downey, Eccles, & Chatman, 2005).

An adequate education and privileged opportunities will not compensate for the lack of racial identity and low self-esteem (Ladner & DiGeronimo, 2003). Students’ attitudes can impact achievement. When African American males exhibit negative self-images and attitudes about school, it leads to lower academic achievement (Fuligni, 2007).

### Extracurricular Activities

Families and schools share the responsibility for supervising school-aged youth. With the overlapping schedules school and parent work hours, nearly 25% to 31% of the school week is not monitored by either entity (Theobald, 2000). The research conducted by Snyder and Sickmund (1999) suggested that the time without supervision has the most profound implications for children. The finding of their study insisted that participation in criminal activity were committed most often between the end of the school day and dinner hour. They elaborated by identifying the hours between 3 – 6 p.m. as the time when most teenagers engage in sexual activities. Unstructured time allows for delinquent behaviors, experimental drug use, and sexual

activity (Theobald, 2000). Structured afterschool activities include adult supervision and meaningful activities that improve academic performance and social behavior (Osgood, Anderson, & Shaffer, 2005).

Participation in after school activities is often viewed as a nonessential part of a child's educational career. Some believe that it interferes with academic performance. Hartman (2011) affirmed that participation in extracurricular activities increased academic performance. Participation in extracurricular activities has been suggested as a means to provide a positive outcome for African American males (Jenkins, 2006). These activities are not only liked to increased academic achievement but allow for an improve self-image, a decrease in behavior problems, and a positive perception of educational organizations. Braddock (as cited in Clincy, 2011) suggested that African American males who participate in afterschool activities such as sports are more likely to view themselves as making positive contributions to their team and to their community. Through sports and other after-school activities, Black males begin to understand the importance of appropriate behavior and high educational standards that lead them in the direction of becoming resilient members of society.

### Understanding Attribution Theory

Weiner's 2006 Attribution Theory provides a means for people to explain their successes and failures. Weiner classified explanations given by students into four areas: ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. The attributions we use to justify how our successes and failures contribute to our actions in future tasks and influence our emotional responses to situational outcomes (McMillan, 2010; Wiener, 2006). As a result, attributions are a critical source of motivation in academic achievement (Weiner, 2006).

In addition to the categories of causation, Weiner (2006) placed the attributions into three dimensions: locus of control, stability, and controllability. Locus of control refers to internal and external factors that contribute to the outcomes of life events. External locus of control is when an individual believes behavior is guided by luck, fate, or other external factors. Internal locus of control is the belief that behavior is guided by personal efforts and decisions (Weiner, 1992).

Studies suggest that some African American students believe that their educational success is controlled by external locus of control. Discrimination and other social barriers have caused them to develop a stable and unchangeable perception of their academic ability (Weiner, 1992). Young African American males question the importance of educational achievement because social inequalities have encouraged the belief there are different rewards for different racial groups. With an understanding of the attribution theory, people can gain more control over expected behaviors (Weiner, 2006). Research suggested that high-achieving African American students perceive themselves as internally controlled and in authority of their social and academic achievement. They also have high aspirations and expectations in regard to their future success (Ford, 2011). Developing a strong internal locus of control in disenfranchised children encourages them to achieve success in spite of the challenges they face (Luthar, 1999).

### Parental Involvement

Latimer (1999) reported that parents of African American children need to be honest about the world in which they live. Parents should speak the truth about racism and other unjust actions such as stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. Black children should be aware that they may need to work twice as hard to earn lower wages than similarly qualified Whites. Parents of Black children should openly discuss that they will always be judged by their skin color first. It is important that young African Americans know the barriers they will face and



that importance of education in tearing those barriers down. Any discussions about discrimination and racism should include the history of African American struggle during the Civil Right Movement. Parents cannot afford to cover up the stories that describe bloodshed thrust on a race fighting through peaceful assembly for equal rights. Black children should know that their grandparents walked to school, dodged rocks, and ignored derogatory comments as they entered schools after segregation. They should be taught to understand that their right to equal education was gained through peaceful demonstrations and out of racial pride.

The desire to learn starts at an early age. Parents need to encourage that desire by setting a vision of their future success (Latimer, 1999). Woodson (2005) wrote that “Negros learned from their oppressors to say to their children that there were certain spheres into which they should not go because they would have no chance therein” (p. 66). Millions of African American males have achieved great success in spite of the adversity they faced (Ladner & DiGeronimo, 2003). Latimer (1999) suggested five steps in providing a positive vision for your child’s future success:

1. Set realistically high expectations and standards for academic performance and personal behavior.
2. Realize that, even if you have no clue now what they want to be, there are many options and opportunities out there for our children.
3. Realize that there are many people willing to help if you seek them out, and programs that can be helpful.
4. Realize that the history of African Americans mostly is defined by the ability to survive and achieve.

5. Realize the potential, the possibilities, and those perhaps unimaginable heights that can be reached by the children who can't remember their homework. Realize that with information and planning you can help your child go far (p.26).

The value of a college education reaches far beyond the ability to attain a good job and high income (Latimer, 1999). Even though there is a relationship between education and occupation, a college degree allows an opportunity to participate in a global economy. A college education is “about having the intellectual means and sophistication to fully appreciate and understand or connection to our inner selves, each other and our God” (p. 29). African Americans have been very successful in many different professional fields. But there are young people who unknowingly miss educational opportunities because they do not understand its importance. A high school diploma is rarely enough to equip one with the knowledge necessary to earn a middle class wage. Parents of African American children need to teach them that earning a college degree increases exposure to diverse ideas and people, leading to a better understanding about interaction and behavioral expectations of others.

Parents play an important role in developing a child's sense of security as competent learners (Fried, 2001). Even though the responsibility of teaching educational skills to young learners is that of educational organizations, parents can monitor their academic performance (Lavoie, 2007). Parents should stay involved and seek opportunities to improve their child's learning. Latimer (1999) suggested that while at home parents should:

- 1) Purchase basic learning supplies to supplement their child's learning.
- 2) Set aside regular time to review homework.
- 3) Allow opportunities for family reading.
- 4) Compile a home library.

- 5) Plan learning activities to the library, museum, and other community organizations
- 6) Ensure that students have ample time for rest, healthy diet, and enough physical activity.
- 7) Don't overwhelm children with extra-curricular activities and overwhelming chores.
- 8) Stake time to listen to your children tell you about their day at school.
- 9) Check your child's notebook and backpack daily to locate teacher notes or graded assignments (p. 159).

Parents who are involved in their child's school tend to have students with fewer behavioral problems, better academic performance, and who are more likely to complete secondary school than those whose parents have no involvement in their school. Parents have an important role in helping their children develop a sense of security, value, and competence as learners (Fried, 2001).

#### Teacher-Pupil Relationships: Beyond Best Practices

Many teachers erroneously believe that if they recognize the race of their students or discuss issues of ethnicity in their classroom, they might be labeled as insensitive or, worse, racist. However, when teachers ignore their students' ethnic identities and their unique cultural beliefs, perceptions, values, and worldviews, they fail as culturally responsive pedagogists. Color-blind teachers claim that they treat all students "the same," which usually means that all students are treated as if they are, or should be, both White and middle class. (Irvine, 2003, p. xvii)

The fate of African American early education lies in the hands of White female teachers. Ninety-three percent of the educators in the U.S. are white, middle-class, professionals. Eighty-three percent of America's elementary teachers are White females (Kunjufu, 2002). Because of their limited contact with African American communities, these teachers are not knowledgeable

about African American culture and the academic needs of African American students (Zamani-Gallaher & Polite, 2010). The lack of cultural understanding and awareness hinders the teacher's ability to develop meaningful relationships and effectively teach black students, especially males. The lack of cultural competence often unknowingly leads to the development of a "school climate that is hostile to student learning" (Lleras, 2008, p. 106). The success of teachers is partly based on their content knowledge but classroom success also encompasses knowledge of the learner (Kafele, 2009).

Many teachers become frustrated with the personalities and conduct of African American males in the classroom. This hinders an educator's ability to effectively teach and develop positive relationships and promotes educational practices that disproportionately impact the educational experience of Black students (Bonner, Lewis, Bowman-Perrott, Hill-Jackson, & James, 2009). The learning is guided by low expectations that has led to an absence of a commitment to learning. This absence of a passion for learning is compounded by the fact that "most teacher education programs do not adequately address the racial imbalance between students of color and White American teachers" (Adkison-Bradle, Johnson, Rawls, & Plunkett, 2006, p. 5). These educators have developed poor relationships and sustain little to no engagement in the classroom.

Inappropriate school behavior has earned African American males labels such as trouble makers and 'at-risk'.

I was walking in the hallway going to the washroom. Then one teacher saw me and dragged me down to the principal's office saying that I was skipping class. She said, "Look at him; he has nothing, no books or anything. He is skipping last period." Then they called my teacher and he told them that he had given me permission to go to the washroom. The teacher who dragged me down to the office had to say sorry. But I know that she still hates me. (Solomon, 2004, p. 5)

Often these behaviors are used as shields to prevent staff and peers from discovering learning disabilities or academic deficiencies. Lack of success in the classroom leads to students' finding any means of attention and reward. Unfortunately, many of these rewards serve as reinforcements for unacceptable behavior. These negative reinforcements have created a feeling of low self-esteem and the lack of purpose. Some young African American men believe that they are not college bound but cell bound. The future they see is clouded with frequent police contact and participation in illegal activity to support their family (Mac Fate, Lawson, & Wilson, 1995).

Denbo and Beaulieu (2002) suggested that a student's identification with educational outcomes increases as teachers forge meaningful relationships with them. Teachers must look beyond effective teaching pedagogy and develop respect and value for all students. To provide an adequate education for all students it is important for teachers to examine their attitudes and beliefs about cultural diversity and "display themselves as fair, caring, helpful, and supportive" (Gay, 2010, p. 210).

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Teachers who successfully educate African American males develop productive relationship with their students (Foster & Peele, 1999). Sometimes, these relationships are forged by the use of metaphorical statements that express teachers' alliance between themselves and their students. Building a strong relationship between teachers and students can result in higher achievement if the relationship includes cultural values and understanding (Abi-Nader, 1993). Foster and Peele used the next two quotes as examples of ways to build teacher-pupil relationships.

Black people have to convince Blacks of how important it (education) is. And how they are all part of that Black umbilical cord because a lot of (Black) teachers, they don't do it consciously, but we are forgetting about our roots, about how we're connected to this umbilical cord, and about everyone we've left behind. We have it now, and we don't have time for the so-called underclass. But we have to educate ourselves as a group because otherwise, what's going to happen to us all? You see what I mean. If I can't see that kid out there in the biggest projects, If I can't see how he and I or she and I are in the same umbilical cord and (if I) so not strive to make us more connected, with a common destiny, then we're lost. (p. 11)

Effective teachers of African American males also use an authoritative approach to developing strong relationships that is founded with respect, involvement, and acceptance (Foster & Peele, 1999, p. 11).

I am part disciplinarian and part cheerleader. My demeanor is relaxed and my personality is very outgoing, I smile a lot; the kids used to call me 'Smiley'. I tend to be upbeat and to let the kids get to know me as a human being. When the kids get to know me as not just their teacher, they are less likely to act up in class and more likely to cooperate with me. Developing these personal relationships prevents a lot of problems and makes it easier for me to get something accomplished in the classroom. I treat my students with respect. No matter who the student is, I believe we can always reach a common ground and common point where we can get along and work together. My students respect me. You can't do anything without respect and discipline. (Foster, 1997, p. 11)

This style of teacher is characteristic of an authoritative parenting approach that integrates firm control, involvement, acceptance, and psychological autonomy (Steinberg, Mounts, & Lanborn, 1990). This technique serves an example of a teacher's sensitive assertion of authority (Polite & Davis, 1999).

There were times when I said, 'If you skip my class, I'm coming down to the mall to get you.' So sometimes I would go to the mall, and it would be a big scene because the class would be waiting there, anticipating me coming back with these six feet, you know, men. And I would go down to the mall, and I would say, 'Hi John!' 'Uh, Hi!' You know. They were always really surprised. I said, 'Well, we come to get you.' And they looked, 'We?' Those kind of confrontations could really get to be sticky, because you had to measure how you were going to approach that, and you had to know who you were talking to and what kind of child this was, and how they gonna react to you. These students, of course, though I was just walking into it, and not thinking each step of the way and how I was going to do it. Some of these students were very belligerent about coming to class, and some of the classes they didn't go to. And it was kind of, they'd pass the word, 'Don't skip -----'s class, I mean, she'll come and get you and that's embarrassing you know.'

We all start up the stairs together, and then I would notice that they were walking ahead of me. And that was my signal to not go in the door at the same time as them, because that would be really embarrassing, and the objective was not to embarrass somebody once you get them to class. (p. 12)

Foster and Peele (1999) used this quote as a means to illustrate how developing alliances and teacher-pupil relationships allowed these expert teachers the opportunity to help their students develop attachments to learning that they may not have developed otherwise. These educators cultivate success and achievement among African American students by looking beyond the risk factors that impede their academic success (Hrabowski, Maton, & Greif, 1998).

### Teacher Expectations

Teacher expectations refer to the attitudes and beliefs educators hold about their students. Teacher expectations directly impact student achievement levels (Zamani-Gallaher & Polite,

2010). Initial expectations of a classroom teacher directly affect a child's chances of success or failure during their academic career (Insel, 1975).

“Teachers in schools with majority of African American students typically have lower test scores than teachers in school with majority of European American students” (Duke, Grogan, Tucker, & Heinecke, 2003, p. 157). This statement supports the need for administration to effectively monitor the quality of teaching in minority schools. Research has indicated that teachers tend to have lower expectations for black students (Duke et al., 2003).

Experimental studies analyzing the connection between teacher expectations and student achievement confirms that educators often consider race when forming opinions about a student's academic potential (Zamani-Gallaher & Polite, 2010). As a result, it is not unreasonable to declare that White teachers' expectations about African American students, especially males, are influenced by various factors of negative beliefs and stereotypes surrounding Black males (Zamani-Gallaher & Polite, 2010).

Low teacher expectations lead to negative interaction and poor classroom practices that affect the achievement of African American students. The lower expectations tend to lead to the underrepresentation of African American males into advanced placement courses and disproportionate enrollment into special education or alternative discipline programs. The disproportionate placement of any group of students means that their representation in that program is significantly higher than their representation in the school population (Harry, 1999).

In regard to African American students disproportionate placement in most disability categories exceeds beyond the acceptable parameters. Black students were placed in intellectually disability (ID) programs at a rate at least twice what is expected, and in programs labeled Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) at a rate one and a half times the expected



(Harry, 1999). In 2000, African American males accounted for 8.6% of the national public school enrollment and constituted 20% of students classified as mentally retarded. Of that 20%, 21% were classified as emotionally disturbed. Twice as many African American boys are placed into special education when compared to African American girls, which supports the fact that the primary cause of poor educational attainment of African American males are school factors (Smith, 2005).

When analyzing gender and race, it becomes apparent that the pattern of disproportionate placement is more extreme for African American males. In addition to academic concerns, zero tolerance and discipline data reveal that Black males are almost three and a half times more likely to be suspended or expelled than White males (Harmon, 2004). Historically, African American students have been burdened by the pattern of overrepresentation in special education programs.

Some researchers contend that the practice of disproportionality is a means of sustaining racial segregation after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (Harmon, 2004). In the 1979 court case *Larry P v. Riles*, the Supreme Court decided that “the California schools had been using inappropriate tests for placement of Black students in EMR classes” (Childs, 1990, p. 6). The judge in this case banned further use of IQ tests for placement into special education classes and ordered the reevaluation of students already placed in those programs (Harry, 1999).

The long-standing and serious issue of over identification of African American students to ineffective and inadequate special education programs must be addressed (Fearn, 2002). Because the Fourteenth Amendment and the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibit the classification of persons in a manner that proves disproportionate, including the harm of separateness, in 1982, a panel formed by the National Academy of Sciences to study the

phenomenon of overrepresentation of African Americans in special education programs (National Research Council, 1982). The finding of the panel concluded three major trends (Harry, 1999):

1. African American students were overrepresented in Educable Mental Retarded (EMR) programs nationwide. Overrepresentation of minorities varied significantly by state, and was more likely to occur as a percentage of the group in a school population increased.
2. The larger the size of the EMR program in a district, the more disproportionate was the placement of minority groups in that program.
3. Districts with larger numbers of students from low socioeconomic levels displayed greater disproportionality.

To effectively educate African American males, teachers must learn to create classroom cultures which are inclusive and respectful (Foster, 1997). Students who perceive their teacher as respectful respond to them in an affectionate manner. Students who like their teacher tend to work harder, listen more, and show more interest in academic success. Students who perceived their teachers as disrespectful tend to respond with negative behaviors or lack of motivation (Landsman, 2011).

Effective teachers of Black males believe that their students are capable of learning the curriculum. They understand that academic achievement is a result of consistent and purposeful effort, not ability (Foster & Peele, 1999). But effective teachers have an understanding that race, culture, or language can interfere with learning. Research reveals that teachers who successfully educate African American males (1) are committed to the black community and provide a sense of family, (2) promote positive racial identity, (3) help students succeed in school endeavors,

despite the racist nature of both the institution and society, by using alternate instructional methods when necessary, (4) take personal responsibility for their students learning, (5) know their subject matter, and (6) are demanding of students in all areas, including curriculum and discipline (Cooper, 2002).

Most importantly, White teachers must develop a hyperconsciousness about race to encourage classroom discussions focused on school-related racial issues. These discussions address and identify racial inequalities in the curriculum, educational practices, and society as a whole. The openness of these discussions will open an outlet for increased tolerance and appreciation for Black students' learning styles (Cooper, 2002).

#### Developing Resource Dependent Relationships

Educational organizations are linked to the communities in which they are located. Schools serve as a center for learning and “influence the aesthetic character of a community” (Chung, 2005, p. 2). The school-community relationship builds a bridge to accessing and “engaging external environments” (Knapp, Copeland, & Talbert, 2003, p. 19).

The external environments of schools impact their internal structure and organizational processes. As a component of a larger environment public schools are influenced by societal conditions, parents, demographic characteristics, and economic forces (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Interactions with external environments are a means to access resources to improve student achievement.

Organizational success can be dependent on the availability of access to resources that maximize an organization's potential. Some schools lack the resources essential for reaching state mandated achievement (Education Trust-West, 2011). As a result, schools must access

external fiscal resources to address student academic weaknesses and increase achievement.

Knapp, Copeland, and Talbert (2003) suggested five tasks that educational leaders must complete to effectively engage external environments and increase student learning and teacher effectiveness.

1. Establishing a focus on learning – by persistently and publicly focusing their own attention and that of others on learning and teaching.
2. Building professional communities that value learning- by nurturing work cultures that value and support their members’ learning.
3. Engaging external environments that matter for learning – by building relationships and securing resources from outside groups that can foster students’ or teachers’ learning.
4. Acting strategically and sharing leadership – by mobilizing effort along multiple “pathways” that lead to student, professional, or system learning, and by distributing leadership across levels and among individuals in different positions.
5. Creating coherence – by connecting student, professional, and system learning with one another and with learning goals. ( p. 12)

Educational equitability has been the topic of research for many years. The quality of education differs depending on the community in which you live (Calman & Tarr-Whelan, 2005). “Children with the unfortunate plight of living in a high-poverty area are most often subjected to the worst public schools that the nation has to offer” (Toomey, 2009, p. 1). Local taxes are the primary funding for many school districts. Districts located in high poverty areas are confined to a state of underfunding. The effect of inadequate funding is that our most disadvantaged youth do not have the opportunities that prepare them for success in academics and life (Stillwell-Parvensky, 2011).

The resource-dependent perspective describes how educational organizations can rely on external environments to obtain scarce resources. The basic foundation of the perspective is the inability of organizations to internally generate the resources needed for sustained growth. When district budgets fail to support necessary programs educational leaders must find “a place to gain scarce resources for the task and technical processes of the organization” (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 260). When effectively used these resources can serve as a source of funding that can help shrink the achievement gap and improve academic proficiency of students living in low-income areas (Gayl & Young, 2010).

In 2008 the Open Society Foundation launched their Campaign for Black Male Achievement in attempt to address the exclusion of African American males from adequate educational opportunities in the United States (Open Society Foundation, 2011). The program has narrowed its focus to three areas that impact the achievements of African American males – family, education, and work. The program is made up of the following elements:

1. Promote education equity, and dismantle of the school-to-prison pipeline, to ensure that black boys have the opportunity to excel academically, to prepare for college, and to learn skills essential to earning a living wage.
2. Strengthen low-income black families through responsible fatherhood initiatives, policy advocacy, and supporting efforts that lift barriers facing single mothers raising black boys.
3. Expand and ensure 21st-century family supportive wage work opportunities for black males.
4. Integrate strategic communications into the campaign's work across its three core areas to promote positive messages about black men and boys.

5. Promote leadership development and advocacy/organizing training for young black males, providing them with the tools to become empowered citizens and informed advocates for themselves and their communities.
6. Serve as a catalyst in the field of philanthropy for leveraging additional private and public funds for the field of black men and boys.
7. Develop strategies that build local coalitions to marshal resources and expertise, to improve life outcomes for black men and boys. (para. 3)

Even with the historical legislation of the Civil Rights Movement, educational success is still out of the reach of African American males (Children's Aid Society, 2008). Young Black males have a higher rate of dropout, special education classification, and suspensions (Open Society Foundation, 2011). In response to the negative information surrounding African American males, The Children's Aid Society created the African American Male initiative (Children's Aid Society, 2008). The programs primary goals are:

1. To more fully understand the issues facing our Black male clients
2. To create new program strategies that will better address the needs of this vulnerable population. (para. 2)

In 2007 The Children's Aid Society launched a new program called *Steps to Success* as a means to "more fully understand the issues facing Black males and create new strategies that will better address the needs of this vulnerable population" (p. 7). *Steps to Success* is a researched-based intervention program that works with schools and families to develop the well-being of each child. The program is composed of five elements:

1. A Life Coach, functioning as a mentor, who will help with the challenges of growing up as an African American male and help to clarify, formulate and implement his life goals.

2. Saturday Cultural Academy, providing cultural enrichment activities highlighting African American history and traditions.
3. Individualized Academic Supports, where each participant will receive one-on-one tutoring from a trained staff member and an engaging curriculum.
4. Everyday Heroes are adult Black males who are concerned about the academic and social challenges facing African American males. They are men of strong character who have a positive insight into being a Black male and a demonstrated success in their personal endeavors.
5. Parent Strengthening and Education allows parents to actively participate in the social development and academic success of their child (p. 8)

The program evaluation is “theoretically-based in the belief that child development happens through reciprocal relationships. Positive relationships (including a Life Coach, a tutor and positive, Black male role models) will protect Black males from some of the societal challenges they face including trauma, stereotype threat, and insufficient academic supports and opportunities” (Children's Aid Society, 2008, p. 10). *Steps to Success* is also based in the “belief that working with schools and families will holistically support the development and well-being of each child in their own unique context” (p. 10).

The Knight Foundation funds programs that focus on youth leadership, community engagement, and social entrepreneurship (Knight Foundation, 2011). “Knight supports naturalization campaigns to increase the number of citizens who are highly motivated to engage with their communities” (para. 7). The organizers launched an e-mentoring program that connects Black professional men with young Black males. “E-mentoring reaches young men in a space both familiar and comfortable, while offering busy professionals an easier way to

volunteer” (para. 7). The *What It Takes* program aims to encourage meaningful relationships between mentor and mentee. The program focus is aimed at nurturing the emotional well-being, behavior, and developing career awareness in African American males. While helping the youth, it also serves as a means for Black professionals to become more involved in their communities.

A school’s eligibility to receive Title 1 funds may be in response to a failure to meet state mandated achievement levels or a high percentage of free and reduced lunch recipients. No matter the reason, many school districts have gained access to Title 1 funds with the purpose of making education equitable for all students (Toomey, 2009). More than 90% of American schools received Title I funds with a goal to increase student proficiency and sustain academic growth (Government Accountability Office, 2011). With flexibility of program implementation, each school determined where the funds would prove most effective in raising student achievement. School districts also focused on programs to support early education, extended instructional time, increase parental involvement, and improved graduation rate (Stullich, 2007).

In an attempt to equalize educational opportunities, school districts must engage external environments and develop resource-dependent relationships. For decades, external funding has been a resource that failing schools use to improve the academic performance of their low-achieving students. School districts across the country have been successful in implementing programs that address the academic experience of disadvantaged youth. If school districts were not able to engage external environments as a means of gaining access to necessary funding, they would continue to fall short of academic requirements. Resource-dependent relationships are a necessary means of addressing the academic deficiencies of disadvantaged youth and an opportunity to narrow the achievement gap.



## Gap Closure Strategies

School districts continue to struggle with implementing strategies to address the racial achievement gaps. Becker and Luthar (as cited in Murphy, 2010) suggested that “despite more than three decades of urban school research and reform aimed at improving disadvantaged student achievement performance, current data on urban achievement reveal that these programs have not met the task” (p. 232). Davison (as cited in Murphy, 2010) wrote that “while individual students may make up lost ground, data suggest that groups of students seldom make up even small amounts of lost ground” (p. 232). More surprisingly, the research conducted by Cook and Evans (2000) suggest that the educational experience of Black students continues to decline.

There is “no magic bullet” to eliminating the achievement gap but there are some interventions that will narrow the differences in academic performance among racial groups. Murphy (2010) encouraged educational organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional program. He suggested that schools “ensure that youngsters on the wrong side of the achievement gap have excellent teachers” (p. 238).

The quality of classroom instruction is centered on teacher effectiveness. Ferguson (as cited in Murphy) wrote “no matter what material resources are available, no matter what strategies school districts use to allocate children to schools, and no matter how children are grouped for instruction, schoolchildren spend their days in social interaction with teachers” (p. 238). Unfortunately, all students are not exposed to high quality teachers. Minority students are more likely to be taught by ineffective teachers (Haycock, 1998). Haycock stated “the critical importance of good teachers has especially profound implications for poor and minority youngsters, because no matter how quality is defined, these youngsters come up on the short end” (p. 14). According to Sanders and Rivers (1996) students who are assigned to ineffective

teachers for multiple years will not meet the expected achievement or growth levels. Studies indicate a bias in teacher assignments, suggesting that African American students are twice as likely to be placed with the most ineffective teachers.

Teacher evaluation programs are a significant tool for school districts to improve educational standards by improving teacher quality. The evaluation process serves as an outlet for administrators to provide opportunities for their teachers to deepen their content knowledge, classroom instruction, and motivation for success (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). Teacher evaluation is a process that includes a combination of procedures and actions that should provide educators with feedback that will enable them to improve their classroom instruction. Teacher evaluation programs are tools that should be used to drive teacher professional development opportunities that will help prepare every student for academic success (TNTP, 2010).

Research indicates that current teacher evaluation practices do not improve teacher effectiveness or provide an accurate description of classroom instruction (Peterson, 2000). Soar, Medley, and Coker (1983) stated that “the methods of evaluating teachers that we have used in the past, and continue to use today, are inadequate” (p. 239). Donaldson (2009) criticized current evaluation practices because “evaluators fail to accurately assess teachers because the infrastructure, resources, and incentives of evaluation and culture of schools rarely support differentiation among teachers” (p. 9).

Teacher evaluation programs fail to recognize and address differences in the effectiveness of teachers (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). “The failure of evaluation systems to provide accurate and credible information about individual teachers’ instructional performance sustains and reinforces a phenomenon that we have come to call the Widget Effect” ( p. 4). The Widget Effect explains the assumption that teacher effectiveness is

the same for all educators. It fails to recognize teachers as individual professionals by ignoring the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers. The following is a list of characteristics of the Widget Effect:

1. All teachers are rated good or great
2. No special attention to novices
3. Excellence goes unrecognized
4. Poor performance goes unaddressed
5. Inadequate professional development (p. 6)

The characteristics of the Widget Effect are intensified by inappropriate evaluation practices and poor implementation. Evaluators are not adequately trained and conduct short, infrequent observations with predetermined expectations for teacher performance. The Widget Effect has a strong presence in current evaluation practices and policies. Improved evaluation systems will offer limited solutions in addressing the flaws in teacher evaluation but will not address the lack of differentiation in teacher effectiveness. Overcoming the Widget Effect involves a deeper knowledge of instructional practices that can potentially guide other organizational decisions (Weisberg et al., 2009). Weisberg et al. (2009) suggested the following strategies as a means to reverse the Widget Effect:

1. Adopt a comprehensive performance evaluation system that fairly, accurately and credibly differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness in promoting student achievement.
2. Train administrators and other evaluators in the teacher performance evaluation systems and hold them accountable for using it effectively.

3. Integrate the performance evaluation system with critical human capital policies and functions such as teacher assignment, professional development, compensation, retention and dismissal.
4. Adopt dismissal policies that provide lower-stakes options for ineffective teachers to exit the district and a system of due process that is fair but efficient. (p. 7)

The practices and policies of current evaluation programs reflect an equal performance among teachers. This inability to observe instructional differences is what strengthens the characteristics of the Widget Effect. Reversing the Widget Effect requires a commitment from all stakeholders. Implementing strategies to include differentiation among teachers will allow educational organizations to recruit and reward the most effective teachers (Weisberg et al., 2009).

The majority of school districts are plagued with teacher evaluation programs that consist of ineffective practices. Evaluators fail to notice that these practices do not improve classroom instruction or student achievement. Administrators tend to allow teachers to comply with evaluation requirements instead of using evaluation feedback as a means to improve instructional strategies (Peterson, 2000).

School districts need to abandon ineffective evaluation programs and implement practices that are accurate and informative. Teacher evaluation programs should reassure educators “that they are doing a good and valued job, give security and status to well-functioning teachers, spread innovative ideas, and reassure the public that teachers are successfully contributing to society” (Peterson, 2000, p. 3). Peterson suggested strategies that will help ensure an effective

teacher evaluation system and result in improved classroom instructions and student achievement:

1. Emphasize the function of teacher evaluation to seek out, document, and acknowledge the good teaching that already exists.
2. Use good reasons to evaluate.
3. Place the teacher at the center of the evaluation activity.
4. Use more than one person to judge teacher quality and performance.
5. Limit administrator judgment role in teacher evaluation.
6. Use multiple data sources to inform judgment about teacher quality.
7. When possible, include actual pupil achievement data.
8. Use variable data sources to inform judgments.
9. Spend the time and other resources needed to recognize good teaching.
10. Use research on teacher evaluation correctly.
11. Attend to the sociology of teacher evaluation.
12. Use the results of teacher evaluation to encourage personal professional dossiers, publicize results, and support teacher promotion systems. (p. 4)

The three school districts within the Blount County area use two different evaluation systems. Alcoa and Maryville School Districts use the Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER) Model. Blount County teachers are evaluated using the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM).

The TIGER model is an alternative evaluation program developed by members of The Association of Independent and Municipal Schools (AIMS) to promote teacher growth using a differentiated model of teacher evaluation that categorizes teacher development into three stages

(Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results, 2012). The guiding principles of the TIGER Model are based on Charlotte Danielson's rubrics and are as follows (Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results, 2012):

1. TIGER is based upon a set of quality teacher performance standards.
2. The model is focused on a continuum of teacher growth for effectiveness and results.
3. The teacher evaluation process (Appendix A) is both formative and summative and results in a tiered approach of teacher support.
4. TIGER includes a "coaching" component for Stage One and a leadership component for Stage Three (Appendix B).
5. The model utilizes and encourages professional learning communities of teachers.
6. TIGER aligns the qualitative evaluation component with the quantitative component.

(para. 4)

To ensure effectiveness as an evaluation program, the TIGER model includes the following components (Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results, 2012):

1. Continuously assesses and reflects, providing feedback for continuous growth.
2. Reflects research-based standards.
3. Involves the collection and review of qualitative and quantitative data.
4. Is developed using feedback and information from all parties involved in the process (principals, teachers, unions, etc.).
5. Includes a process of recalibration of the evaluators to ensure the rubrics are being used correctly (ensuring inter-rater reliability).
6. Is reviewed and fine-tuned to reflect the changing needs of the organization (Appendix

C). (para. 2)

TIGER is the only state approved teacher evaluation model that combines observation data and interactive professional development technology with rubrics (Appendix D) outlining effective teaching strategies and instructional practices. It is a program developed by Tennessee practitioners that facilitates four elements to promote teacher engagement: 1) focused observation (Appendix E), 2) swift feedback tied to research-based standards, 3) prescribed professional development, and 4) continuous monitoring throughout the year (Association of Independent and Municipal Schools, 2011, p. 2). Marilyn Mathis, executive director of AIMS, says “nothing is more vital to ensuring that our children are college- and/or career-ready than the ongoing development of our teachers’ skills and knowledge through personalized opportunities. TIGER has been created to formatively support and develop teaching to the highest potential through the collaborative interaction of instructional leaders and teachers” (Association of Independent and Municipal Schools, 2011, p. 1).

TEAM is based on collaboration between principals and teachers to ensure that students receive the best classroom instruction. The TEAM teacher evaluation model is a cycle of ongoing improvement for teachers, students, and the educational system of Tennessee. With the use of observations (Appendix F) and data together, TEAM provides districts with increased support and professional development opportunities for teachers to improve instructional effectiveness (Tennessee Department of Education). TEAM is a rating model with a rubric (Appendix G) that focuses on four domains: Planning, Environment, Professionalism, and Instruction.

The TEAM evaluation model encourages teachers to reflect on their instructional strategies and determine opportunities to improve classroom instruction. TEAM requires educators to address the individual needs of their students and better structure their professional

learning (Tennessee Department of Education). The developers of this evaluation program suggest that TEAM provides school leaders “with a powerful model to build and support their instructional teams, which will in turn help students succeed” (p. 1).

The lack of exposure to early literacy and educational programs is a contributing factor to the racial achievement gap. To address an inadequate educational foundation, schools must implement programs that counteract the external factors that exist in the home and community. Schools must find a means to increase instructional time to supplement “the educational package that low-income and African American children receive” (Murphy, 2010, p. 243).

Response to Intervention is focused on monitoring student’s academic growth in an attempt to shrink the gap between racial groups. The premise is that struggling learners will be able to make greater gains with the implementation of additional research-based instruction. In the past the gap between groups of learners was maintained with the absence of supplemental instruction. The RTI process offers additional focused instruction that makes it possible to lessen the achievement gap between racial groups (O’Meara, 2011).

Response to Intervention (RTI) describes how student achievement is increased with changes in classroom instruction. The basic components of RTI are: 1) research-based instruction and intervention in the general classroom, 2) monitoring and measuring student progress, 3) using these measures of progress to guide instruction and make educational decisions (Klotz & Canter, 2007). Before the implementation of RTI, there was a regular program for academically proficient students and a special education program for children with disabilities. Special education lost its effectiveness as a service and the children placed in special education continued to perform below academic expectations (Hale, 2008). In addition, too many



children who struggle academically did not receive interventions in regular education and had to wait and fail before they were offered help.

New federal laws, such as No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, mandated that school districts focus on increasing academic proficiency by addressing deficiencies before the child is referred to special education services (Klotz & Canter, 2007). These laws are the guiding force behind the importance of schools providing high quality instruction and interventions to guide all students toward “meeting grade level standards” (p. 1). RTI encourages instructional teams to focus on the educational needs of all children (Hale, 2008). The essential components of RTI are as follows:

1. High quality research-based instruction and behavioral support in the regular classroom.
2. Universal screening of academics in order to determine which students need closer monitoring or additional interventions.
3. Multiple tiers of increasingly intense scientific, research-based interventions that are matched to student needs.
4. Use of a collaborative approach by school staff for development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process.
5. Continuous monitoring of student progress during the intervention, using objective information to determine if students are meeting goals.
6. Follow-up measures providing information that the intervention was implemented as intended and with appropriate consistency.
7. Documentation of parent involvement throughout the process.

8. Documentation that any special education evaluation timelines specified in IDEA 2004 and the state regulations are followed unless both parents and the school team agree to an extension. (p. 1)

The RTI process typically includes three or four levels of instruction, which are called tiers (Figure 1). If students' levels of performance do not increase, they are enrolled into the next tier where they will receive additional, more intense instruction (Hale, 2008).

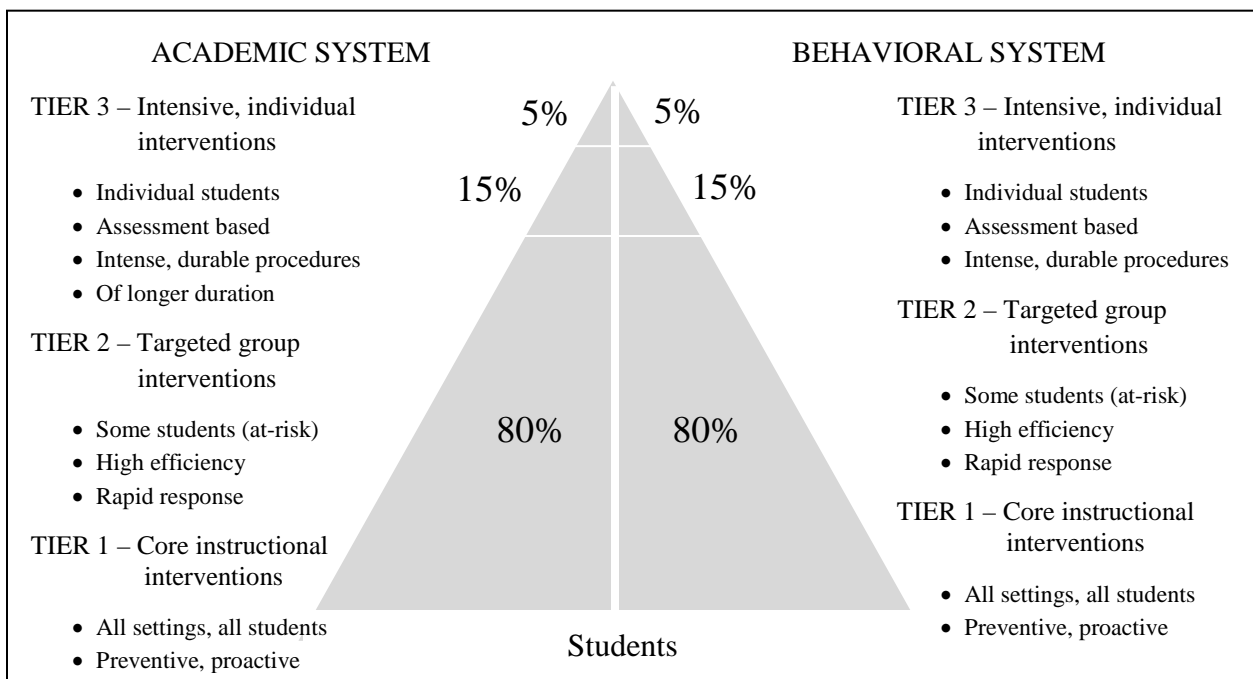


Figure 1. Response to Intervention Flow Chart. Adapted from ABE Elementary, 2010.

Most of the interventions are provided in the regular classroom setting that enables RTI to be considered general education instead of special education. Special education services are timely and very expensive. Reducing the number of students placed in special education would create an additional financial resource that could be redistributed into general education (Hale, 2008).

In Tier 1, students will receive scientific, research-based instruction. During Tier 1, instructional teams develop a scope of sequence for student learning. Curriculum-based measurements serve as progress monitoring tools and determine if students are meeting the expected performance levels (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2010). Even though the teacher modifies instruction or provides accommodations in Tier 1 to assist struggling students, the main premise is to focus on good instruction and ongoing assessments to ensure that each child receives good instruction (Hale, 2008). For students who continue to score below benchmark scores, the instructional team will continue to closely monitor their progress and refer the child to Tier 2 for more intensive instruction (Scanlon & Sweeney, 2008).

Unlike the Tier 1 modifications or accommodations, the child's instructional programs are designed to address their specific academic deficiencies to help them meet benchmark performance levels. Tier 2 instruction is simultaneous with Tier 1 interventions and "should be provided by a teacher who has specialized knowledge of how to promote development in the targeted area (Scanlon & Sweeney, 2008, p. 22). Typically, Tier 2 instruction is provided in small group multiple times a week. Interventions should be timely, structured, and "focused on the cause of a student's struggles rather than a symptom" (Buffum et al., 2010, p. 15). Student progress is closely monitored to determine if the intervention is effective. The progress data are used to make changes in instruction until the student achieves academic success (Hale, 2008). Intervention should be considered prevention and students who continue to struggle in Tier 2, should then receive Tier 3 instruction (Buffum et al., 2010).

Tier 3 interventions are implemented if the child fails to respond to Tier 1 and 2 instruction. If interventions have been effective and the student continues to perform below benchmark levels, the instructional team should question whether the child has a disability.

Many Tier 3 students “are like knots, with multiple difficulties that tangle together to form a lump of failure” (Buffum et al., 2010, p. 15).

The services provided in Tier 3 are not drastically different from interventions Tiers 1 and 2. However, students who are given Tier 3 instruction most likely need instruction from an expert teacher to improve their academic performance (Scanlon & Sweeney, 2008). Children placed into “Tier 3 are likely to receive individualized instruction in an attempt to help them overcome their learning problems” (Hale, 2008, p. 4).

One of the greatest benefits of the RTI process is that it eliminates the need for a student to fail before receiving the necessary interventions within the classroom setting. It also reduces the number of student referrals to special education and increases the amount of academically successful students in the general curriculum (Klotz & Canter, 2007). “RTI techniques have been favored for reducing the likelihood that students from diverse racial, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds are incorrectly identified as having a disability” (p. 2). RTI helps educators distinguish between academic deficiencies caused by learning disabilities and deficiencies caused by the lack of prior instruction. It is not a process to implement in an attempt to “raise student test scores, but rather a process to realize students’ hopes and dreams. It should be a way to meet state mandates, but a means to serve humanity. Once we understand the urgency of our work and embrace this noble cause as our fundamental purpose, how could we possibly allow any student to fail?” (Buffum et al., 2010, p. 16).

### Summary

This chapter reports the research on cognitive and noncognitive factors and how they impact academic success of African American males. Even though African Americans have overcome many racial milestones, some writers “suggest that Black males are an endangered

species” (Polite & Davis, 1999, p. xi). African American males are overrepresented in special education programs, alternative behavior schools, and criminal justice systems. They are underrepresented in advanced academic courses, 4-year college institutions, and executive positions (Children's Aid Society, 2008). An investigation into the factors of academic success for African American males may bring about strategies that will better prepare African American males to become competitive members of our global community.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate cognitive and noncognitive factors that contribute to the academic performance of African American males. Specifically, this research was an exploration of the perceived level of importance placed on parental involvement, educator-school relationship, community influences, and personal attributes. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology of the study including (1) an explanation of the sample selection, (2) a description of the procedure used in designing the instrument and collecting the data, and (3) an explanation of the statistical procedures used to analyze the data.

The research design is of critical importance and serves as the basis for the entire study (Berkowitz, 2011). The quantitative research process has been described as being embedded in the positivist paradigm, which declares that the purpose of research is to develop confidence in the truth or falsehood of an educational claim (Mertens, 2004). The research design is described as a process of developing a test to support or refute the knowledge claim within a certain level of probability (Mertens, 2004). This research was conducted using a nonexperimental research design that McMillan and Schumacher (2012) defined as a description of a phenomena and examination of “relationships between different phenomena without any direct manipulation of conditions that are experiences” (p. 22).

Nonexperimental quantitative research designs are classified into six different categories: descriptive, comparative, correlational, survey, ex post facto, and secondary data analysis (McMillan, 2010). This study was designed to provide a description of the state of a phenomenon at a specific point in time (Boushey, Harris, Bruemmer, & Archer, 2008). Qualitative research has been characterized as a tool to study relationships between different

variables. Punch suggested that “for the quantitative researcher, reality is conceptualized as variables which are measured, and primary objectives are to find how the variables are distributed, and especially how they are related to each other, and why” (p. 2). Nonexperimental quantitative research can be viewed as quantitative survey methods that analyze the relationships between variables (Punch, 2003).

To maintain validity and reliability, the researcher focused on the structure of the survey. Krosnick and Presser list the following techniques to guide the development of the survey (p. 264).

1. Use simple, familiar words (avoid technical terms, jargon, and slang)
2. Use simple syntax
3. Avoid words with ambiguous meaning, i.e., aim for wording that all respondents will interpret in the same way
4. Strive for wording that is specific and concrete (as opposed to general and abstract)
5. Make response options exhaustive and mutually exclusive
6. Avoid leading or loaded questions that push respondents toward an answer
7. Ask about one thing at a time (avoid double-barreled questions)
8. Avoid questions with single or double negative

The data for this study were collected using a survey with two open-ended questions. The researcher evaluated the participant’s perceptions about factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee.

## Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

Research Question 1: To what extent do the participants perceive that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed?

Ho1<sub>1</sub>: The perception that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

Research Question 2: To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior?

Ho2<sub>1</sub>: The perception of the participants that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

Research Question 3: To what extent do the participants perceive that when compared to Caucasian males, African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success?

Ho3<sub>1</sub>: The perception that when compared to Caucasian males, African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

Research Question 4: To what extent do the participants perceive that is it possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups?

Ho4<sub>1</sub>: The perception that it is possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

Research Question 5: To what extent do the participants perceive that noncognitive variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?



Ho5<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between noncognitive variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

Research Question 6: To what extent do the participants perceive that demographic variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?

Ho6<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between demographic variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

Research Question 7: To what extent do the participants perceive that institutional variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?

Ho7<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between institutional variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

### Population

This study focused on individuals who are familiar with the demographics of the areas located in the Blount County, Tennessee. The participants of this study are attendees of four local churches. They are adult males and females of varied ages and ethnic classification.

The churches included in this study are Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion under the leadership of Reverend Doctor Richard Gadzepo, Rest Haven Missionary Baptist Church under the direction of Reverend Richard Turney, St. John Missionary Baptist Church under the direction of Reverend Charles Lomax, and Saint Paul A.M.E. Zion Church under the leadership of Elder Willa Estell. The churches represent the three areas of Blount County: Alcoa, Maryville, and

Blount County. The church representing the Hall community of Alcoa is Rest Haven Missionary Baptist church. The Old-Field community of Alcoa is represented by St. John Missionary Baptist Church. Mount Pleasant A.M.E. Zion church is located in Rockford, which represents the Blount County area and St. Paul A.M.E. Zion represents the city of Maryville. Each of these areas falls in the geographical boundaries of Blount County, Tennessee.

### Instrumentation

The researcher determined that a survey was the best means of collecting the data to complete this study. A survey instrument with 27 closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions was developed and distributed after the morning church service on the prescheduled dates. The survey was composed of 30 statements. While conducting the survey, the researcher concluded that a 5-point Likert scale would be most appropriate for this study. The participants were instructed to indicate their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An additional question encouraged participants to communicate their perceptions of factors that contribute to the success of African American males that established a qualitative component to the research.

Section one of the survey included items 1-6 that obtained demographic information about the participants who agreed to respond to the survey. Section two of the survey included items 7, 8, 9, and 10 measured the respondent's perception about the issues found in research questions 1 through 4. Items 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, and 26 measured the respondent's perception about the variables associated with noncognitive factors contributing to academic success. Items 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, and 27 measured the respondent's perception about the variables associated with demographic factors contributing to academic success. Items 10, 12, 16, 18, 21, and 24 measured the respondent's perception about the variables associated with institutional factors

contributing to academic success. Section three of the survey includes three open-ended questions. Item 28 encouraged the respondents to describe what they believe to be the root cause of the academic achievement gap between White males and Black males. Item 29 asks the respondents to describe how schools have contributed to the low academic performance of African American males. Item 30 encourages respondents to describe what they believe can be done to improve the academic performance of African American males.

### Data Collection

The researcher supplied each of the pastors with 75 surveys that were handed to each of the congregation members before the end of the morning worship service. After the participants answered the questions, the researcher collected the surveys. Prior to beginning the data collection for this study, permission to pursue completion of this research was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of East Tennessee State University and Pamela Scott, the chair of the Educator Leadership and Policy Analysis Department (ELPA). Also, the researcher acquired permission from the pastors to use the facilities of the participating churches.

The study included provisions to minimize the risk of harm to participants. Research participants were provided with full disclosure of the entire purpose of the study and were encouraged to give honest responses. This nonexperimental study required informed consent and participants were entitled to withdraw from the study at any time. Basic demographic information was collected but participant identities remain confidential.

## Data Analysis

The statistical analysis of the data was conducted using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) Version 20. Frequency tables and other statistical graphics were constructed enable readers to visualize the results of the quantitative data.

All seven research questions and their corresponding null hypotheses were analyzed with a series of single sample *t*-tests. The data collected from the survey instrument were compared to a statistical value of 3.0 which was established as the midpoint for research questions 1 through 4. Research question 5 was analyzed using the responses to survey questions 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, and 26. Research question 6 was analyzed using the responses to survey questions 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, and 27. Research question 7 was analyzed using the responses to survey items 12, 16, 18, 21, and 24. Responses to items 11 through 27 were assigned the following values: responses on the negative end of the Likert Scale was assigned a value of 1, responses indicating neutral were assigned a value of 2, and responses on the positive end of the scale were assigned a value of 3. The mean of questions was calculated and analyzed using a single sample *t*-test, compared to a statistical value of 2 which was established as the midpoint for research questions 5 through 7. The researcher chose to use a .05 level of significance.

## Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the research design, the population that was studied, seven research questions and the corresponding null hypothesis, and the procedures for data analysis.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of local church members related to the academic success of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee. The data collected through the survey instrument helped answer the seven research questions geared toward understanding the factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in the Blount County, Tennessee. The data were organization in themes that captured the general consistencies among participant responses. The study included 153 participants who attend one of the four churches surveyed that are located in the three areas of Blount County.

This chapter contains an overview of the participants involved in the study and an analysis using the information collected from the 27 survey questions measured on a 5-point Likert scale and three open-ended questions (Appendix H). The survey was administered at four local churches after the morning service. A total of 153 adults consented to participate in this study, and their demographic information is represented in Figure 2.

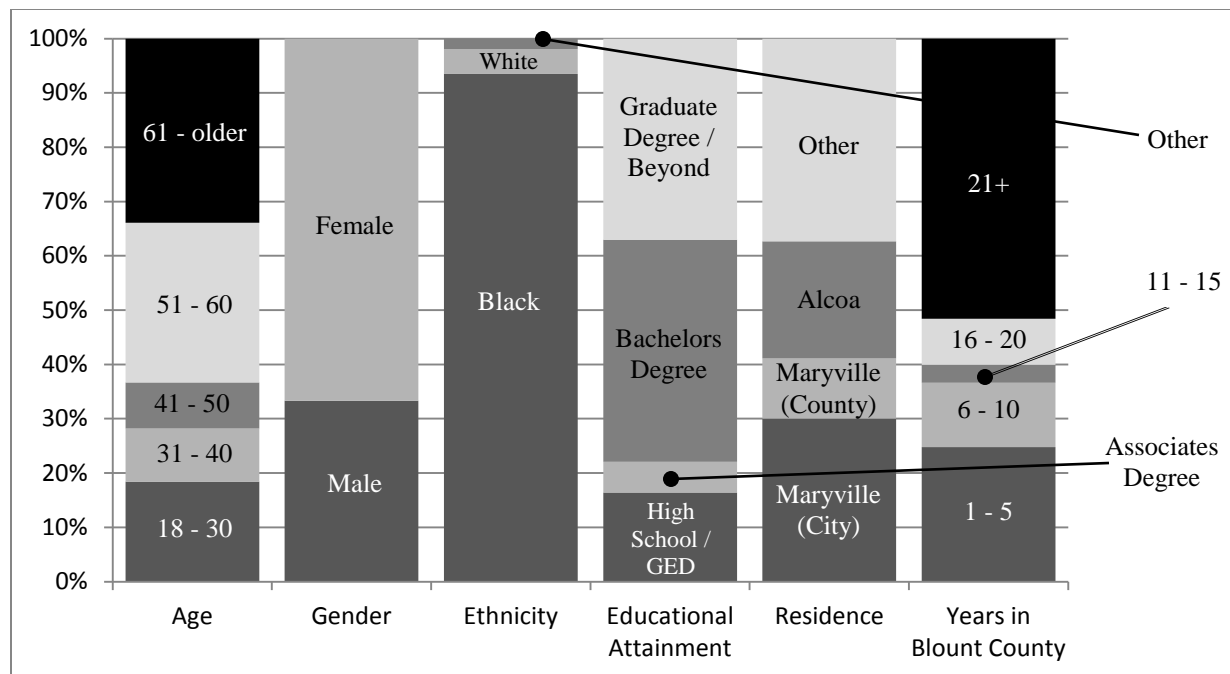


Figure 2. Distribution of Participant's Demographics

### Research Question 1

Research Question 1: To what extent do the participants perceive that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed?

Ho<sub>1</sub>: The perception that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 3, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 4.44 (*SD* = .79) was significantly higher than 3,  $t(153) = 22.40, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis Ho<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.69 to 4.56. The effect size *d* of 1.81 indicates a large effect. Figure 3 is an illustration of the

participant responses. The results lead to the conclusion that respondents perceive that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed. The frequency chart represents the number of participants who indicated strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree on the survey.

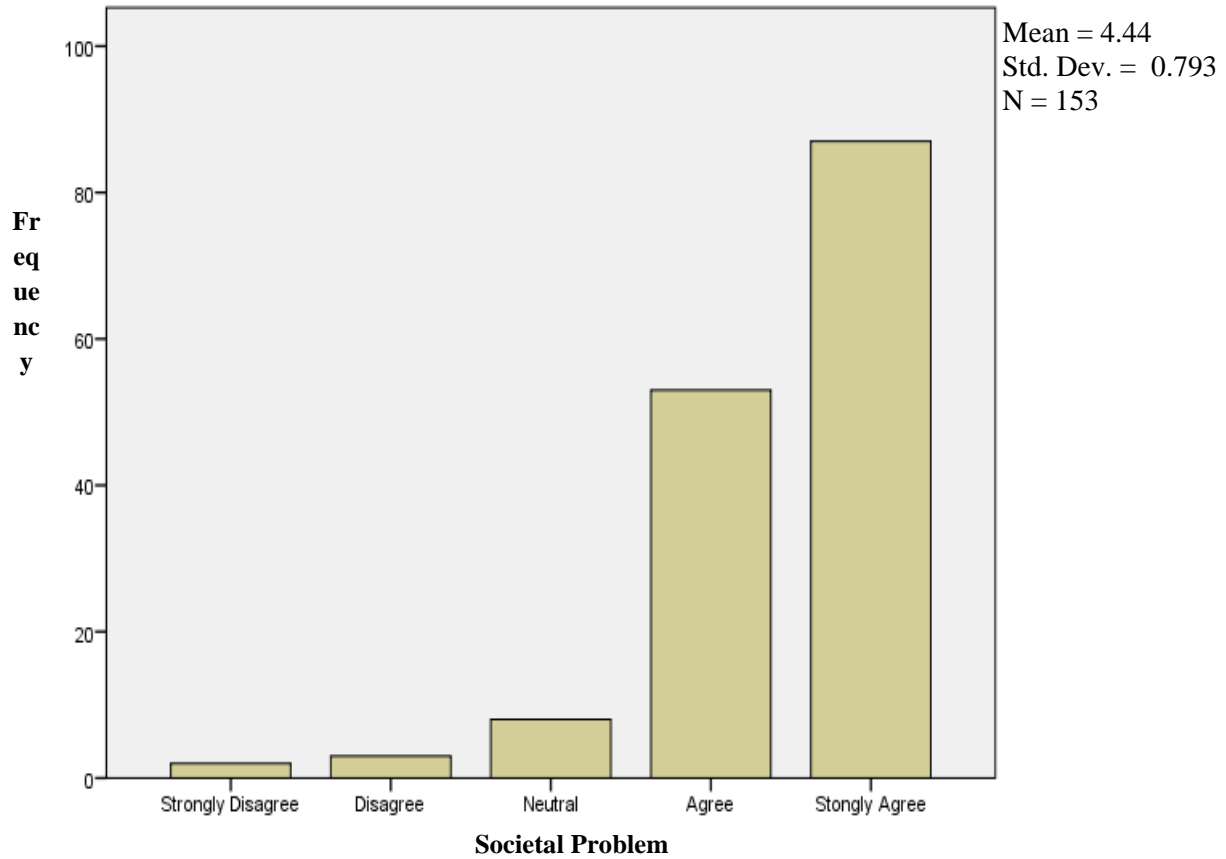


Figure 3. Distribution of Participants' Responses

### Research Questions 2

Research Question 2: To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior?

Ho<sub>2</sub><sub>1</sub>: The perception of the participants that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 3, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 4.46 (*SD* = .79) was significantly higher than 3,  $t(153) = 23.02, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis  $H_0: \mu = 3$  was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.66 to 4.59. The effect size *d* of 1.86 indicates a large effect. Figure 4 is an illustration of the participant responses. The results lead to the conclusion that respondents perceive that student behavior directly affects academic performance. The frequency chart represents the number of participants who indicated strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree on the survey.

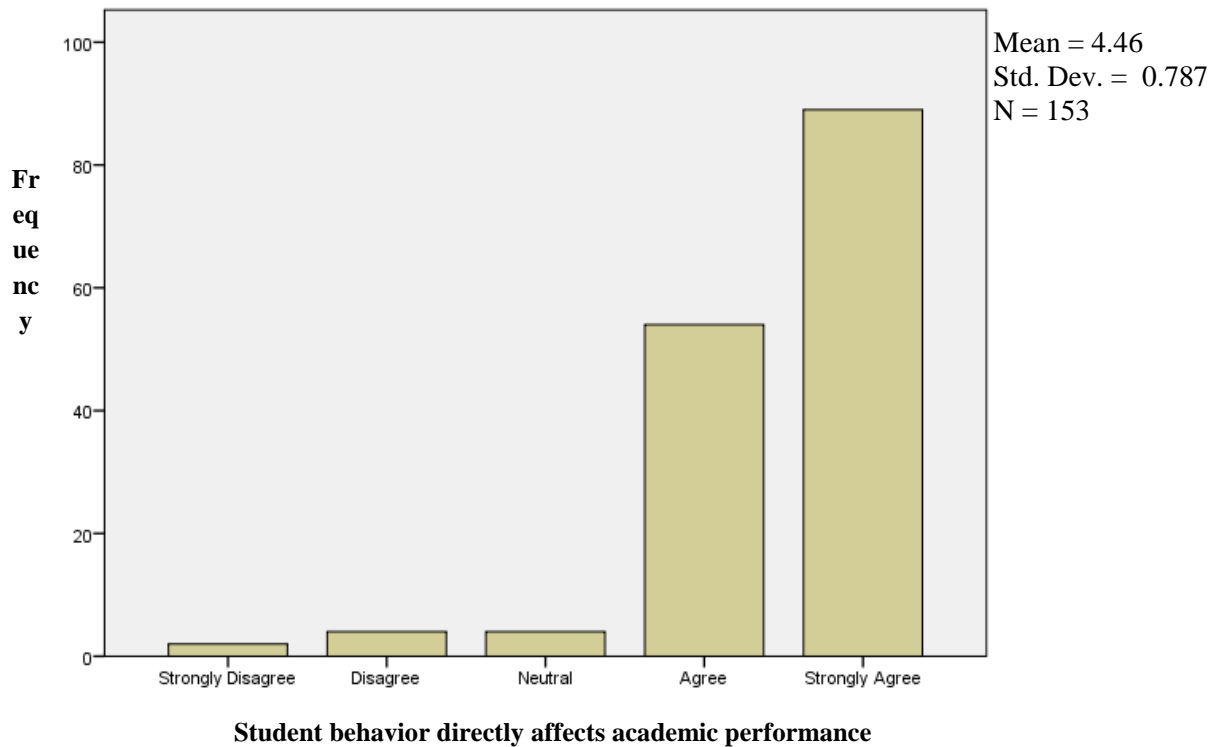


Figure 4. Distribution of Participants' Responses



### Research Question 3

Research Question 3: To what extent do the participants perceive that when compared to Caucasian males, African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success?

Ho3<sub>1</sub>: The perception that when compared to Caucasian males, African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 3, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 4.52 (*SD* = .91) was significantly higher than 3,  $t(153) = 20.68, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis Ho3<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.62 to 4.67. The effect size *d* of 1.67 indicates a large effect. Figure 5 is an illustration of the participant responses. The results indicated the respondents perceive that when compared to Caucasian males African American males are capable of achieving the same level of academic success. The frequency chart represents the number of participants who indicated strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree on the survey.

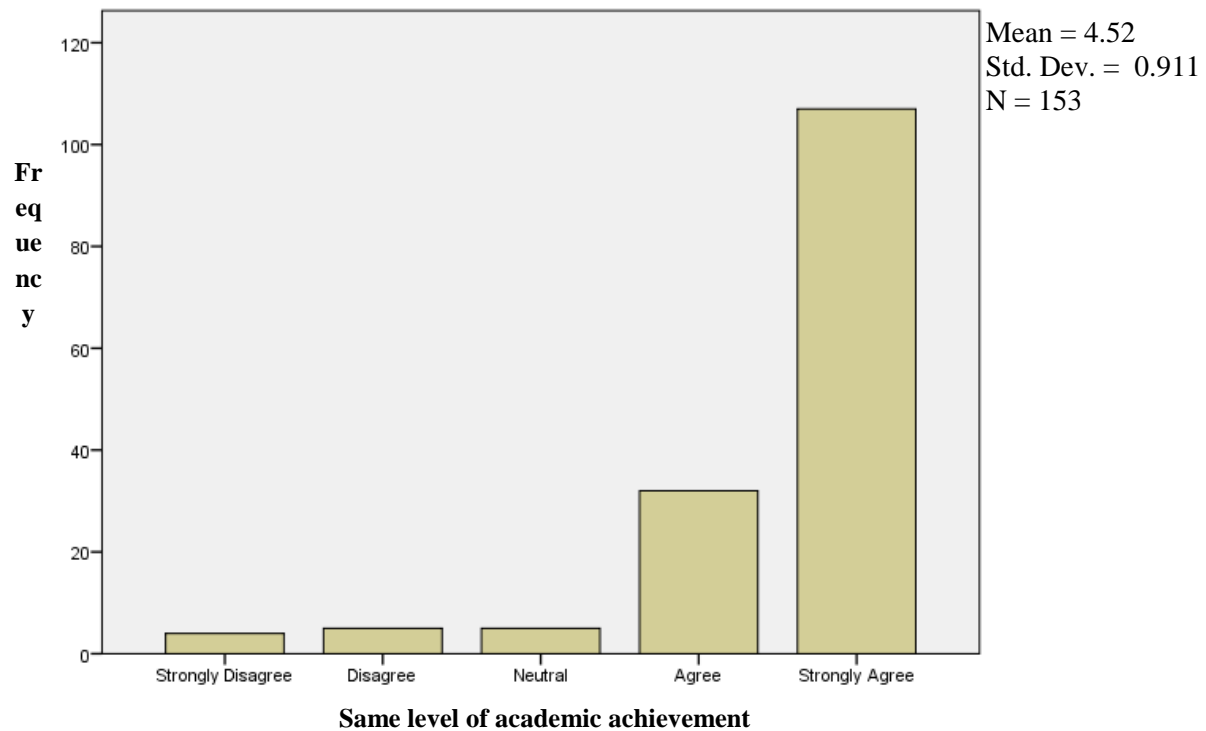


Figure 5. Distributions of Participants' Responses

#### Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent do the participants perceive that it is possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups?

Ho4<sub>1</sub>: The perception that it is possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 3.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 3, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 4.39 (*SD* = .80) was significantly higher than 3,  $t(153) = 21.32, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis Ho4<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.74 to

4.51. The effect size  $d$  of 1.72 indicates a large effect. Figure 6 is an illustration of the participant responses. The results indicated the respondents perceive that it is possible to successfully address the academic achievement gap between racial groups. The frequency chart represents the number of participants who indicated strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree on the survey.

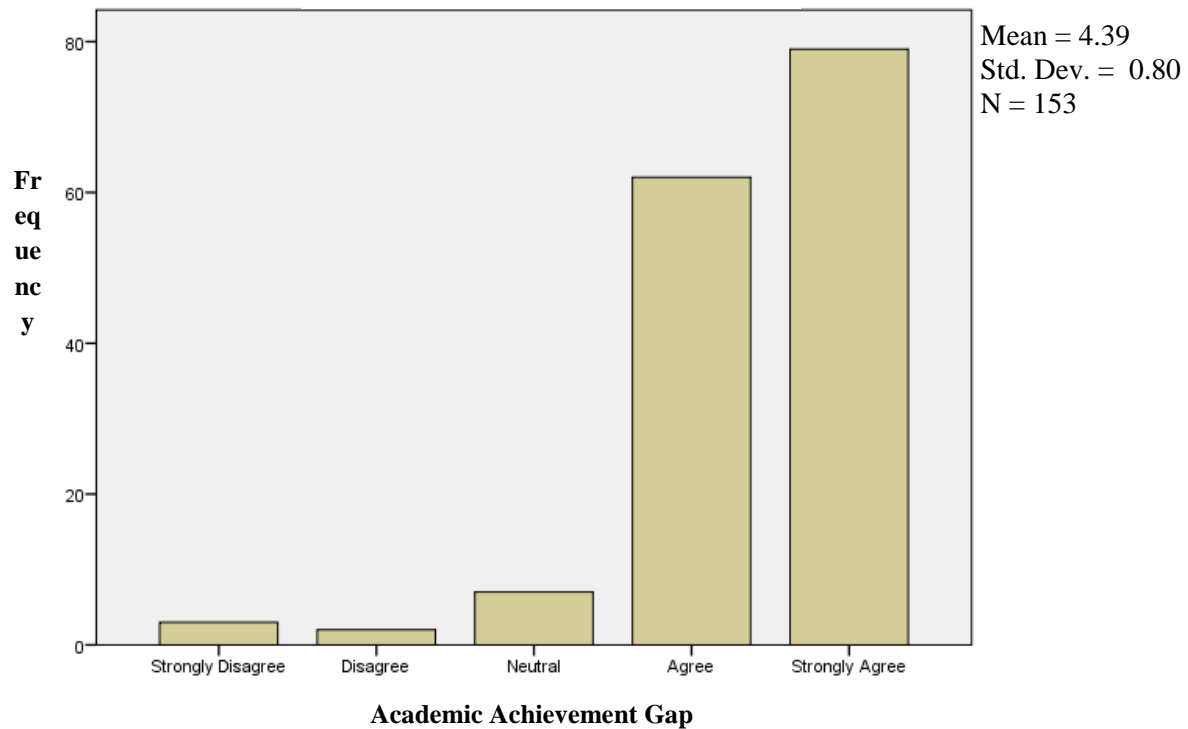


Figure 6. Distribution of Participants' Responses

#### Research Question 5

Research Question 5: To what extent do the participants perceive that noncognitive factors impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?

Ho5<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between noncognitive variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 2.99 (*SD* = .16) was significantly higher than 2,  $t(153) = 75.5, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis Ho5<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 2.04 to 3.01. The effect size *d* of 6.10 indicates a large effect. Figure 7 is an illustration of the participant responses. The results indicated the respondents perceive that non cognitive factors impact the level of academic achievement of African American males. The frequency chart represents the number of participants whose mean response was less than 2 or greater than 2.

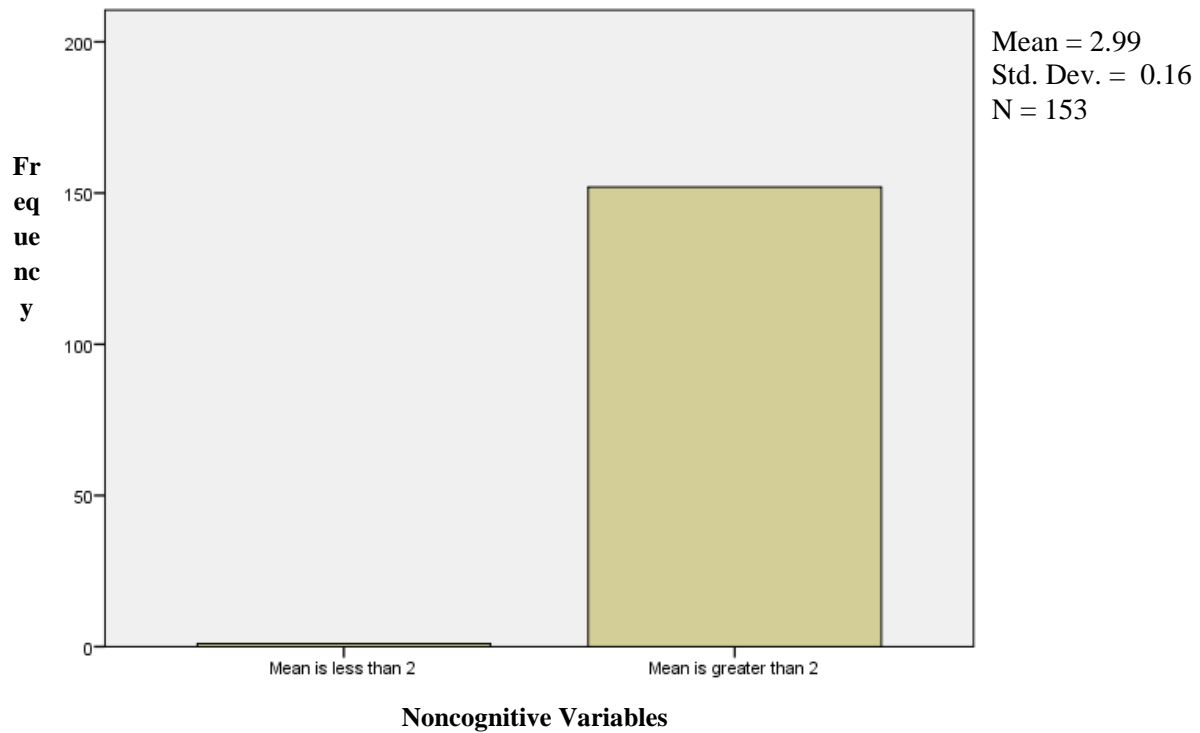


Figure 7. Distribution of Participants' Responses. The following items were analyzed from the survey: 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, and 26.

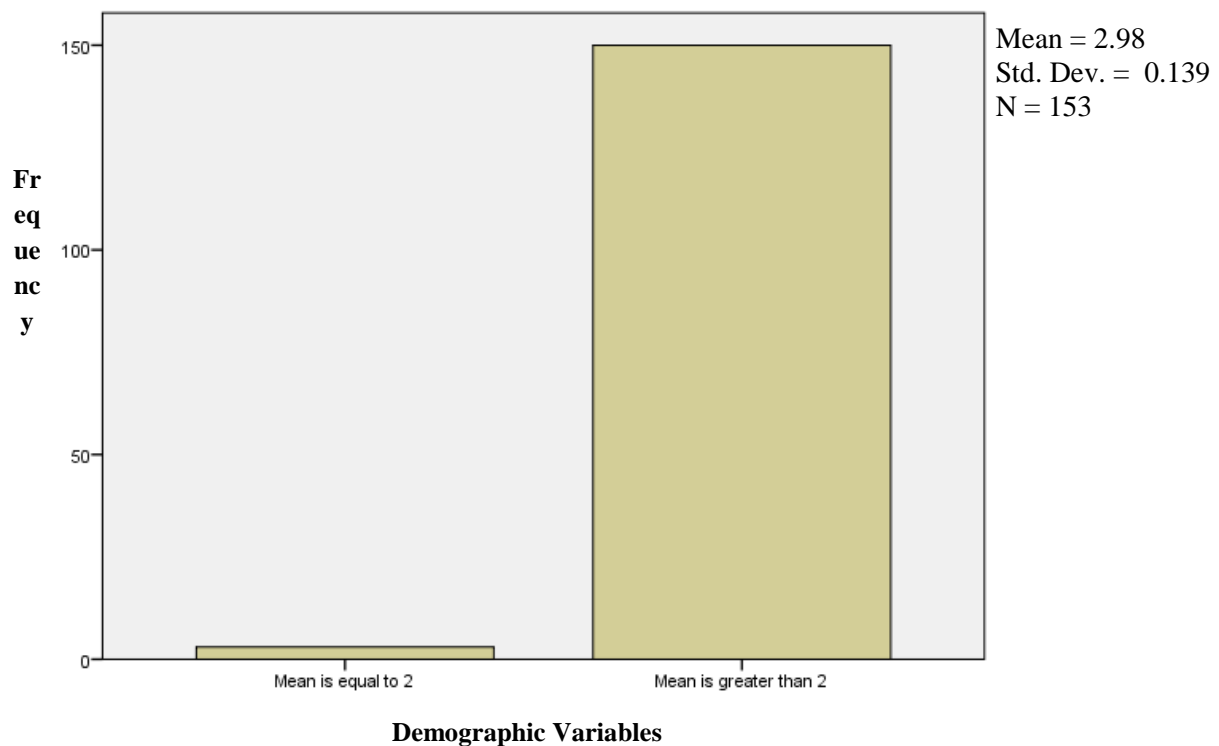
### Research Question 6

Research Question 6: To what extent do the participants perceive that demographic variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?

Ho6<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between demographic variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 2.98 (*SD*

= .14) was significantly higher than 2,  $t(153) = 87.18, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis  $H_0$  was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.04 to 3.00. The effect size  $d$  of 7.04 indicates a large effect. Figure 8 is an illustration of the participant responses. The results indicated the respondents perceive that there is a relationship between demographic variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males. The frequency chart represents the number of participants whose mean response was equal to 2 or greater than 2.



*Figure 8.* Distribution of Participants' Responses. The following items were analyzed from the survey: 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, and 27.

### Research Question 7

Research Question 7: To what extent do the participants perceive that Institutional variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males?

Ho7<sub>1</sub>: The perception that there is a relationship between institutional variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males is not significantly different from impartiality, the value of 2.

A single sample *t* test was conducted on the responses of 153 congregation members of four local churches in the Blount County area to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2, the value representing impartiality. The sample mean of 2.97 (*SD* = .16) was significantly higher than 2,  $t(153) = 75.25, p < .001$ . Therefore the null hypothesis Ho7<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for the responses mean ranged from 1.05 to 2.999. The effect size *d* of 6.08 indicates a large effect. The results indicated the respondents perceive there is a relationship between institutional variables and the level of academic achievement of African American males. Figure 9 is an illustration of the participant responses. The frequency chart represents the number of participants whose mean response was equal to 2 or greater than 2.

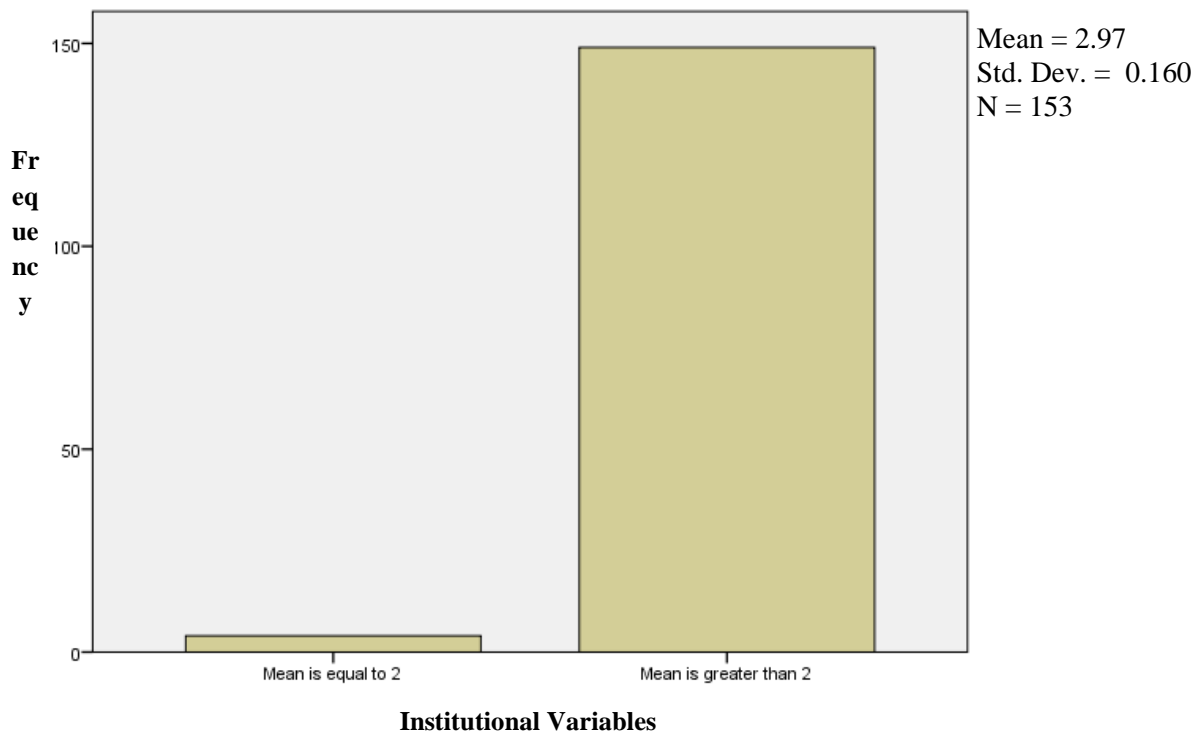


Figure 9. Distribution of Participants' Responses. The following items were analyzed from the survey: 12, 16, 18, 21, and 24.

### Open-Ended Questions

In addition to the 27 survey questions, participants had the opportunity to complete three open-ended questions that focused on the achievement gap, schools, and improvement strategies. One hundred sixteen participants responded to statement 28: In three sentences or less, describe what you believe is the root cause of the academic achievement gap between White males and Black males.

One of the respondents stated “because we live in a racist society, a lot of our men give up on life”. Another respondent suggests that “most African Americans do not know their true heritage / lineage, not so with whites. It is the key to know where you are from to know where



you are going”. It was also suggested that “African American males have limits set on learning by teachers. They are ignored in groups and made to feel worthless”. The previous statement is supported by another respondent who writes “preconceived notions by school systems and teachers as to the character of African American males”.

Other respondents suggest the lack of a male role model has contributed to the academic achievement gap. A respondent wrote “the family system. In most single-parent homes the father is not present and I think it’s most prevalent in African American households”. Another participant expanded on the previous statement by suggesting a “lack of male role models in the home and community”. Another response supported the lack of male role models but suggests that a “lack of African American teachers in the school system” has contributed to the achievement gap.

Of the 153 participants, 99 responses were provided to statement 29: In three sentences or less, describe how schools have contributed to the low academic performance of African Americans. The following statements support the concern that African American males are valued for their athleticism even to the detriment of academics:

“The schools pass the African American males through the system regardless of their grades, especially athletes. The schools need to make better efforts to communicate with parents and have consequences for low performance.”

“Lack of communication and evidence these students are more than sports.”

“Inadequate programs to address Black males – low hiring of racially diverse teachers and far too much emphasis on sports than education.”

“African American males have mainly been put on pedestals as top athletes but never scholars.”

Other respondents suggested that schools have contributed to the achievement gap because they “have failed to hire a diverse enough group of teachers that are able to relate well to the students.”

The responses suggest that many of the participants agree with the levels of expectations placed upon African American males by teachers:

“They have been labeled as low academic achievers.”

“Teachers set low expectations for them. Teachers tend to place them in low performing classes.”

“It is possible that they may expect them to perform at a lesser level.”

I feel teachers already have an “assumption” that the Black male is already behind and doesn’t feel the need to help them further their goals.”

One hundred three participants provided responses to statement 30: In three sentences or less, describe what you believe can be done to improve the academic performance of African American males. Many of the respondents placed the burden of improving the academic achievement of African American males on the parents:

“It starts at home. Parents have to be involved and concerned with their child’s education. It’s not up to the schools to do all the work. It’s on them too!”

“Family and parent involvement in all levels of education; You can’t rely on the teacher to teach your child everything – it comes from home too.”

“Parents should start early educating males (sons) at home, introducing them to free education such as museums, theaters, etc.”

Other respondents suggest that schools need to take the lead in addressing the academic achievement of African American males. One respondent wrote the need to “focus on academics – Provide more diversity programs, teach believing that all students can achieve. Another reply suggests the need to “establish an adequate curriculum that addresses all levels of achievement.” Another reoccurring statement was the feeling of needing “more role models and examples of success to help African American males have self-worth, encouragement, and strive to see the big picture instead of selling themselves short by taking the easy way out.”

Everyone should take responsibility in the efforts to improve the academic performance of African American males. As written by one of the respondents, it takes the “family, community, and school working together” to improve the academic performance of African American males. Another reply stated that “there has to be an extraordinary amount of care and discipline from parents and teachers to push these kids to do their best. Both sides are sides are accountable!”

Racial classification is positive for some but one of the respondents viewed as the root of division among races: “stop telling them and treating them as if they are different – example = calling them African American male”.

Two of the respondents suggest that we return to segregation by reinstating an “all Black school”. Another participant states that the “best and most extreme” answer is to educate African American males at a “boarding school with appropriate staff”.

### Summary

This chapter provides a brief discussion of the data obtained from congregation members at Mount Pleasant A.M.E. Zion, Rest Haven Missionary Baptist, Saint John Missionary Baptist,

and Saint Paul A.M.E. Zion were presented and analyzed. There were seven research questions and their corresponding null hypotheses. All data were collected through a survey. Congregation members were informed that their participation was voluntary. One hundred fifty-seven surveys were distributed and returned. Four surveys were incomplete and removed from the count. Survey participation resulted in 97% of usable data from 153 respondents.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for researchers who may use the results as a resource when developing strategies and techniques for improving the academic performance of African American males. The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that contribute to the academic success of African American males in the Blount County Area.

The data were collected using a survey that was administered to congregation members at four local churches. The seven research questions presented in chapters 1 and 3 were used to conduct a statistical analysis. The research questions were analyzed using a one-sample *t*-test. Three open-ended questions were analyzed and the description of the findings was reported. The total number of participants from four local churches was 153. The level of significance used in the analysis was .05. Findings revealed that the overall perception of participants supported the suggestion that the factors discussed in the study contribute to the academic success of African American males in Blount County.

#### Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine a community's perception of factors that contribute to the academic performance of African American males in Blount County, Tennessee. This research focused on noncognitive, demographic, and institutional factors.

The following conclusions were based upon the findings from the data of this study:

1. The first research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that the academic performance of African American males is a societal problem that needs to be addressed? The data revealed a significant difference was found in participants' perception about research question 1 and its null hypothesis. The population mean of 4.44 was significantly greater than 3, the value designated as impartiality. Item number 7 on the survey instrument was analyzed to determine the participants' perceptions. These findings support the ideas of Hopkins. He suggested that "working together as a community is an important component and critical issue in teaching Black males. Though each participant shares in the idea that even though everyone has their individual schooling experiences and alternative schools and programs for African American males, all of their stories and experiences directly connect to the central theme of community" (Hopkins, 1997, p. 84). In recent years there has been a push to reshape communities using the African Proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child". There has been an increase in the understanding that "public policy and institutions have a role to play in supporting parents as they work to raise their children. This is evidence in the creation of community-based, family support centers, a growing investment in developmental child care programs like Early Start and Head Start, and an increase in child rearing programs and interventions for parents in high risk categories" (Booth & Crouter, 2001, p. 189).
2. The second research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that there is a relationship between academic performance and behavior? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in participants' perceptions about research question 2 and its null hypothesis. The population mean of

4.46 was significantly greater than 3, the value designated as impartiality. Item number 8 on the survey instrument was analyzed to determine the participants' perceptions.

Participant responses support the suggestion that behavior affects academic achievement. Burton and Kappenberg emphasized the need to merge behavior and academics instead of viewing them as separate entities. "Student success in the academics needs to be understood as a form of behavior, overcoming impediments to learning depends on systematic examination of all the potential factors that may influence the elements of academic success, such as information processing, learning, and classroom behavior" (Burton & Kappenberg, 2012, p. 121). Vitto (2003) suggested "classroom behavior is closely tied with academic success and failure" which should encourage schools to develop "relationship-driven" strategies that focus "on preventing misbehavior by implementing effective instructional strategies that enhance academic success and increase student motivation" (p. x).

3. The third research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive when compared to White males, African American males are capable of achieving the same level of success? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in participants' perceptions about research question 3 and its null hypothesis. The population mean of 4.52 was significantly greater than 3, the value designated as impartiality. Item number 9 on the survey instrument was analyzed to determine the participants' perception. These findings parallel the idea that when given the appropriate resources, African American males can reach the same level of achievement attained by their White counterparts. In the past scientists have used phrenology as a means to classify African American intellectually inferior and justification for their enslavement (Reilly,

Kaufman, & Bodino, 2003). These early studies of scientific racism were later rejected and researchers turned their attention to environmental factors as a means to justify intellectual differences among races. Some researchers attribute the higher levels of academic achievement among African Americans “to the social and cultural effects of being raised in an environment that places a strong value on educational achievement” (Nevid, 2012, p. 279).

4. The fourth research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that it is possible to address the academic achievement gap between racial groups? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in participant’s perceptions about research question 4 and its corresponding null hypothesis. The population mean of 4.39 was significantly greater than 3, the value designated as impartiality. Item number 10 on the survey instrument was analyzed to determine the participants’ perceptions. These findings suggest that participants have a mindset that every child has the ability to perform academically. Their responses support the belief that redefining current educational reform efforts to encompass effective strategies and guiding principles will “assist policy makers, districts, communities, and schools in closing achievement gaps among various groups” (Williams, 2003, p. 178).
5. The fifth research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that noncognitive variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in participants’ perceptions about research question 5 and its corresponding null hypothesis. The population mean of 2.99 was significantly greater than 2, the value designated as impartiality. Items number 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, and 26 on the survey instrument were



analyzed to determine the participants' perceptions. These findings support studies that emphasize the "importance of noncognitive variables in affecting performance in school" (Boykin, Franklin, & Yates, 1979, p. 208). Cognitive variables are very important to the intellectual development of children but data "strongly suggest that personality factors and the ways in which children perceive themselves in the school setting must be considered when seeking ways to improve educational outcomes. This may be extremely important for Black children" (Boykin, Franklin, & Yates, 1979, p. 209) .

6. The sixth research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that demographic variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in participants' perceptions about research question 6. The population mean of 2.98 was significantly greater than 2, the value designated as impartiality. Items number 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, and 27 on the survey instrument were analyzed to determine the participants' perceptions. Researchers have found that demographic variables were significant indicators of academic achievement. A student's individual characteristics "are related to student outcomes, including demographic characteristics, such as ethnicity and gender; family characteristics, and family structure" (Rumberger & Palardy, 2005, p. 7). When parents emphasize the importance of education, it has a greater influence on educational success than family make-up or social class (Casanova, Garcia-Linares, de la Torre, & de la Villa Corio, 2005) .
7. The last research question of the study was: To what extent do the participants perceive that institutional variables impact the level of academic achievement of African American males? Through an analysis of the data, a significant difference was found in

participants' perceptions about research question 7 and its corresponding null hypothesis. The population mean of 2.97 was significantly greater than 2, the value designated as impartiality. Items number 12, 16, 18, 21, and 24 on the survey instrument were analyzed to determine the participants' perceptions. These findings support research that suggests "that the school environment of educational institutions is important in shaping the educational aspirations, orientation, and achievement of individual students" (McDill, Meyers, & Rigsby, 1967, p. 181). The characteristics of educational organizations such as, student composition, resources, structure, policies, and processes, influence student performance and support a common theme of school effectiveness (Rumberger & Palardy, 2005).

#### Recommendations for Practice

The findings of this study have allowed me the opportunity to identify the following recommendations for practice for stakeholders involved in the educational experience of African American males in the Blount County area:

1. Educational organizations should actively attempt to better educate parents about the importance of exposure to high-quality early-childhood educational programs.
2. The faculty and staff of educational organizations should develop culturally responsive school environment. Curriculum and instruction should recognize all students' cultural background, community environment, and learning style.
3. Educators should build strong, caring relationships that convey rigorous and attainable expectations for academic achievement. Teachers' actions should reflect the belief that young African American males have the potential to succeed.

4. Schools should research strategies to build and sustain strong relationships with families. Schools should learn a family's expectations for their son and develop an effective means to regularly communicate son's academic progress.
5. District and school administrators should develop partnerships with community organizations to create another source of funding for programs that the district budget cannot support.
6. Schools should develop data teams to analyze formative assessment material and pinpoint problems in instruction or goals for intervention.
7. Educational and Community agencies should recruit and hire African American males to serve as positive role models. Schools should create opportunities for African American youth to observe the actions of role models in an attempt to understand racism and learn positive strategies to counteract negative images.
8. Administrators should research policies and procedures to reduce disparities in disciplinary referral rates and placement in special education programs.
9. Finally, all stakeholders should illustrate and emphasis the need for continued education. African American males should receive a clear message of the incentives gained from educational attainment.

#### Recommendation for Future Research

The results presented in this research study indicate that community members perceive noncognitive, demographic, and institutional factors associated with the academic success of African American males in the Blount County, Tennessee. Even though the results of this study suggested that there exists a significant difference between the perception of the participants and the null hypotheses, future research should be conducted to assist educational organizations in

developing effective strategies and techniques necessary in addressing the poor academic performance of African American males. Recommendation for further study includes expanding the focus area to enable future researchers an opportunity to make more appropriate generalizations about the impact of cognitive and noncognitive variables on the academic success of African American males. Even though the research finding may not be applicable to other areas, further studies of a broader area may uncover a consistent theme in academic success factors. An additional study could be expanded to include a comparison of public school with high levels of achievement among African American males to a school with low rates of academic achievement among African American males.

Further studies could examine the difference in the academic success levels of African American males in private schools and public schools. Greeley suggest that minorities who attend private schools display higher levels of achievement than those who attend public school (2002, p. 3). Private schools tend to develop a learning environment with strict discipline policies and higher educational standards (Ansalone, 2009).

Teachers “may be unaware of their own biases and prejudices” which may result in an unconscious decision to set lower academic expectations for minority students (Anderson & Davis, 2012, p. 41). Biased perceptions of a student’s academic ability encourage teachers to underestimate a child’s future performance (Fashola, 2005). Future research should investigate the instructional strategies and pedagogy of teachers who have high growth and achievement scores among African American students.

Athleticism seems to have greater importance when compared to academics among African Americans. “It has become all too easy for many Blacks and Whites to assume that the horizons of Black life are coterminous with the achievements of athletes, and one of the most

damaging and least publicized corollaries of the sports obsession has been a pronounced rejection of intellectual ambition” (Hoberman, 1997, p. 4). A more in-depth study of participation in various types of extracurricular activities should be included in further research. Football and basketball tend to be the most popular choices of extracurricular activities for African American males. Activities “that have valuable returns” such as chess, band, and chorus, “are often ignored” (Frierson, Wyche, & Pearson, 2009, p. 336).

In the process of conducting this study, I found an abundance of information regarding the poor educational state of African American males. I found no research suggesting that the academic performance of African American females is as poor. Apparently African American females have exhibited resilience while handling the cuts from a ‘double-edged sword’. African American females are subjected to discrimination because of the intersection of their gender and race but tend to reach higher levels of achievement and exhibit fewer behavioral problems when compared to males (Evans-Winters, 2007). Further research should include a comparison of the academic performance of African American males to African American females in secondary education.

The desegregation of public schools was met with resistance from the White and Black community. Even though Whites were more vocal and violent with their opposition, there were “a few Black antidesegregationists” (Adair, 1984, p. 37). It has been more than 50 years since legal segregation but its effects are present today. Studies suggest that “enforced segregation is psychologically detrimental to the members of the segregated group” (Loh, 1984, p. 61). After completing an analysis of the demographic information, there was a recurring theme in the response to question 9: Compared to White males, African American males are as capable of achieving the same level of success. Nine out of the 153 respondents marked on the negative

end of the Likert scale which indicated a disagreement to the statement. Further analysis revealed that the respondents were 51 and older. This research study could be extended with an examination of how the psychological effects of segregation may have encouraged African Americans over 60 to maintain the thought of white superiority.

Ethnic classifications have become a government tool used for statistical purposes. It should be used to describe the biological composition of an individual and not for social classifications. Race allows people to identify themselves with a particular group. It is important in the development of a person's social identity. "Such identities often carry a great degree of racial pride" (Peoples & Bailey, 2012, p. 37). There is an ethnic hierarchy that has been in existence for more than a century. Thus hierarchy is separated into three tiers: 1) White Protestants of various origins but with no distinguishing characteristics, 2) other White ethnics who are classified as Catholic or Jewish and some Asians, 3) the bottom tier includes Blacks, Latinos, American Indians, and some Asians (Marger, 2012, p. 135). Further research could investigate whether racial classifications encourage a sense of inferiority among African Americans.

### Reflection

The struggles of a young black male are forever there  
Will we ever get past them...it's you that I dare  
I dare you to change history as a Black male  
Don't stay out on the corner..get shot..  
and have the woman in your life walk around with a black veil  
Change who you are and do something  
Have goals and show women you're a man who can be loving  
Show the world that you are not just another statistic  
Walk your life and be legit  
You don't belong in an overcrowded jail system  
You belong in an office building with a high paying/ranking job  
You belong walking the streets and show others there's more to life than being a slob  
Show America..show the WORLD

the STRUGGLES OF A YOUNG BLACK MALE (Up, 2008).

I believe the current educational achievement of African Americans can be improved when every educator develops a mindset that every child has the ability to make educational gains when given adequate resources, proper instruction, and rigorous but attainable expectations. African American males need to understand that we are actively engaged in their lives beyond the walls of the classroom. Educators should serve as mentors to African American males and provide them with guidance and encouragement.

The struggles of African American men are not easy. They work twice as hard to offset racial stereotypes that have suppressed them for centuries. As stated by Frederick Douglas, “if there is no struggle, there is no progress” (as cited in Graves, 2000). Barak Obama is categorized in the bottom tier of the ethnic hierarchy. His racial classification has caused him to face numerous challenges on his road to becoming America’s first African American President. Educational institutions will face numerous challenges as they implement programs to increase academic achievement among African American males. Developing a focused educational reform plan and believing in our efforts will help lessen the racial achievement gap.

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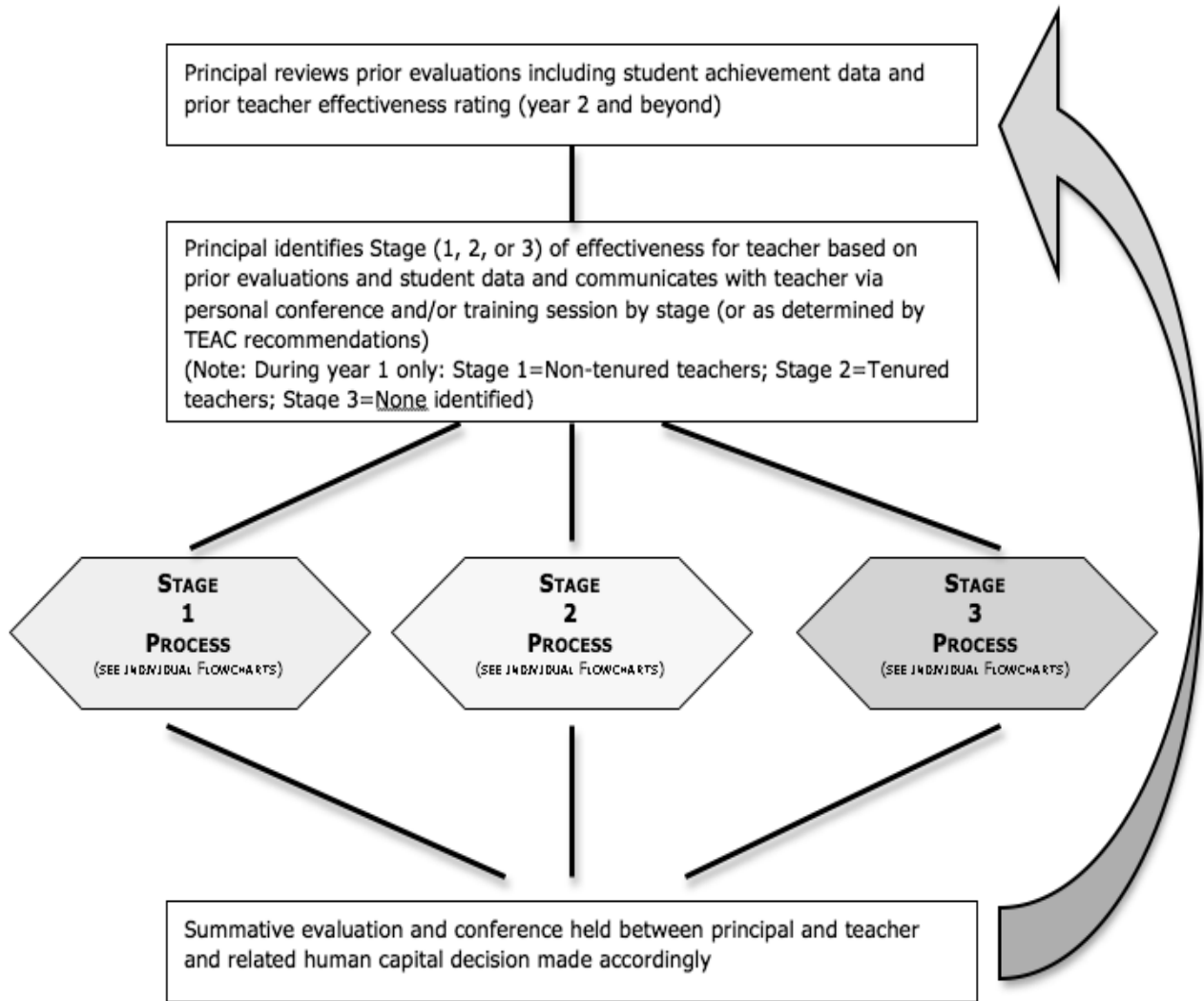
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TIGER Evaluation Flowchart

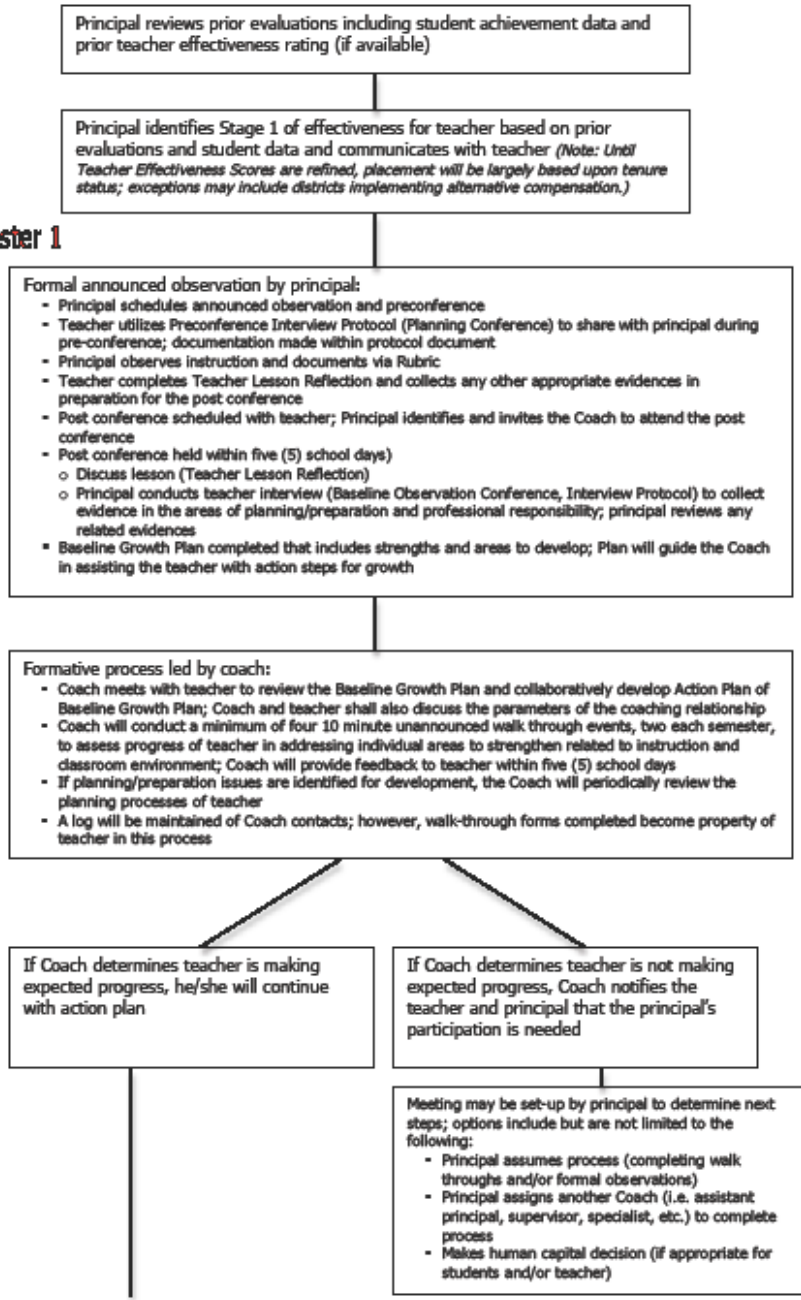


APPENDIX B  
TIGER Stages Chart

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL GROWTH FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND RESULTS

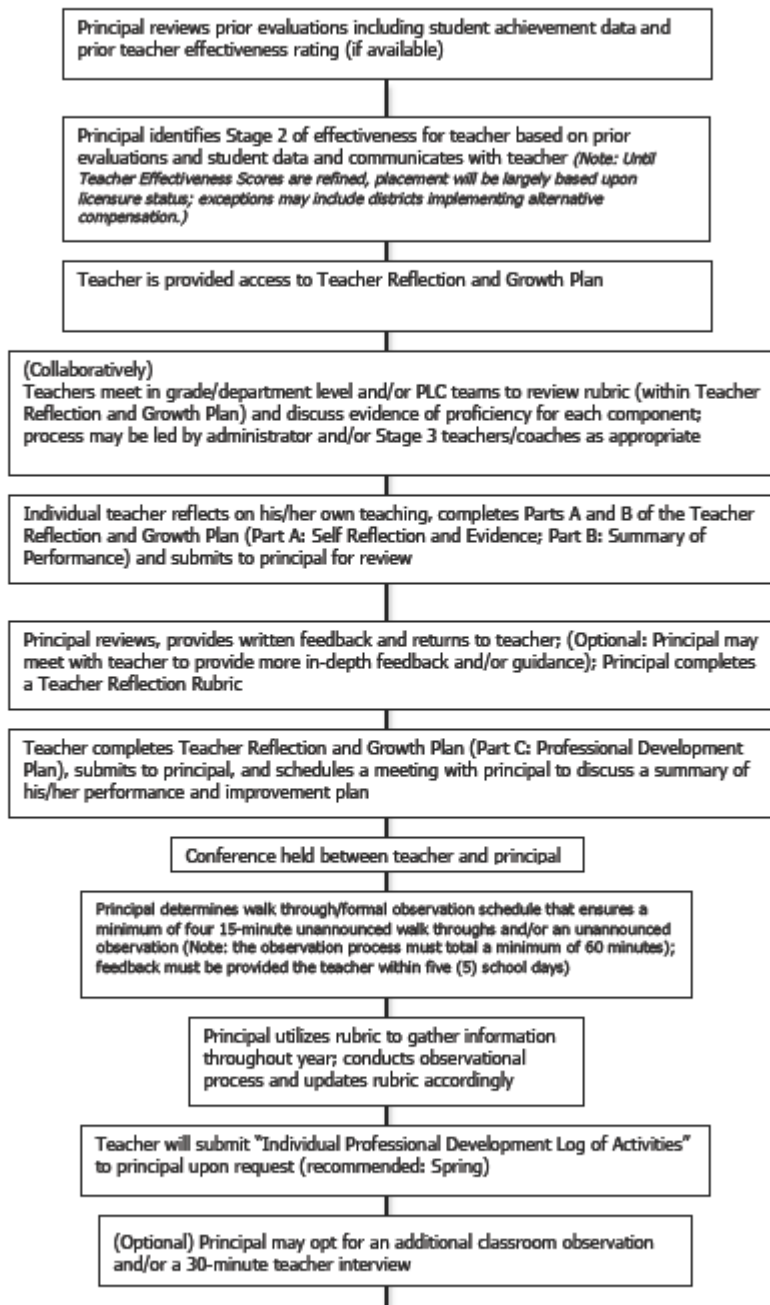
STAGE 1 FLOWCHART

**Semester 1**



TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL GROWTH FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND RESULTS

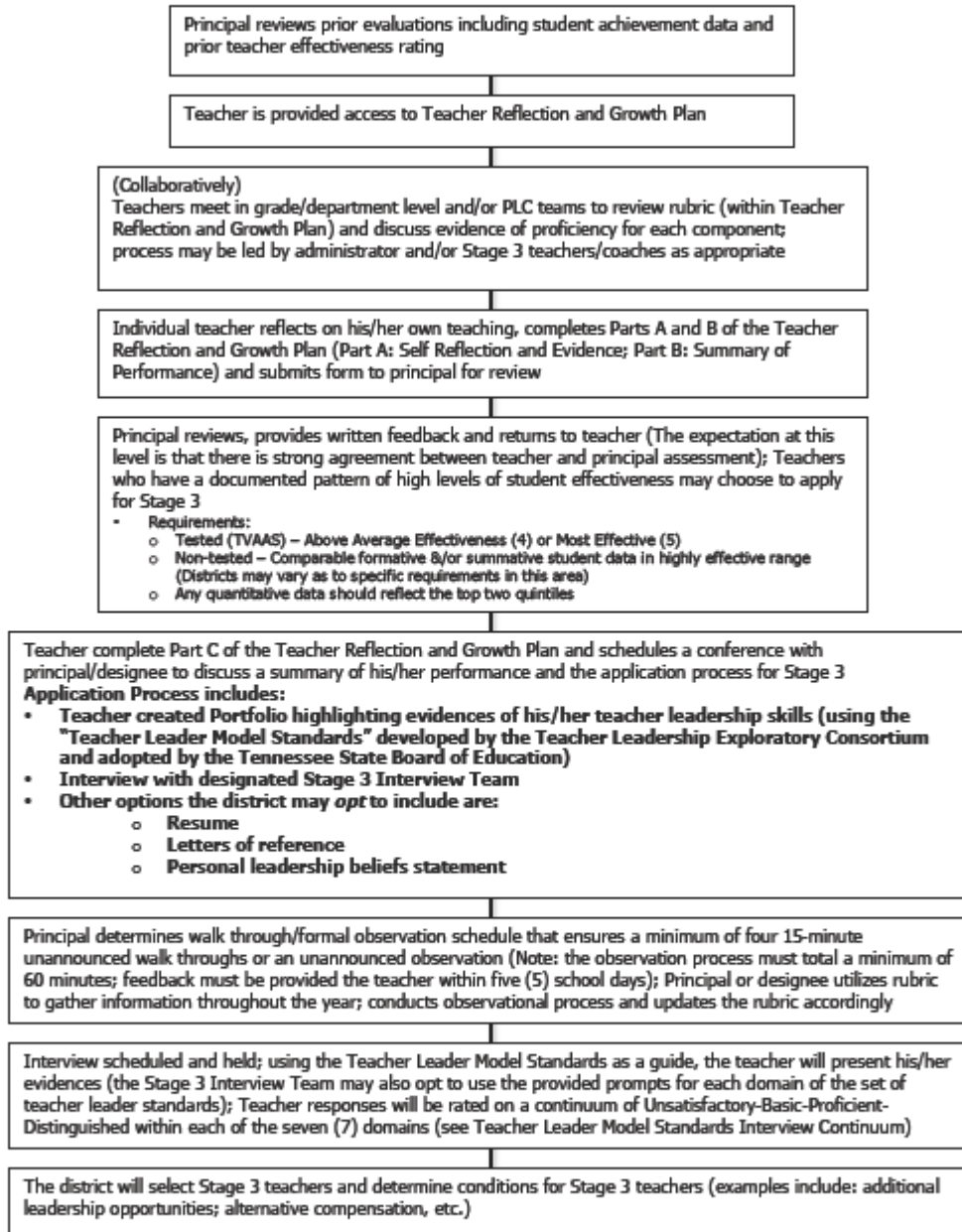
STAGE 2 FLOWCHART



TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL GROWTH FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND RESULTS

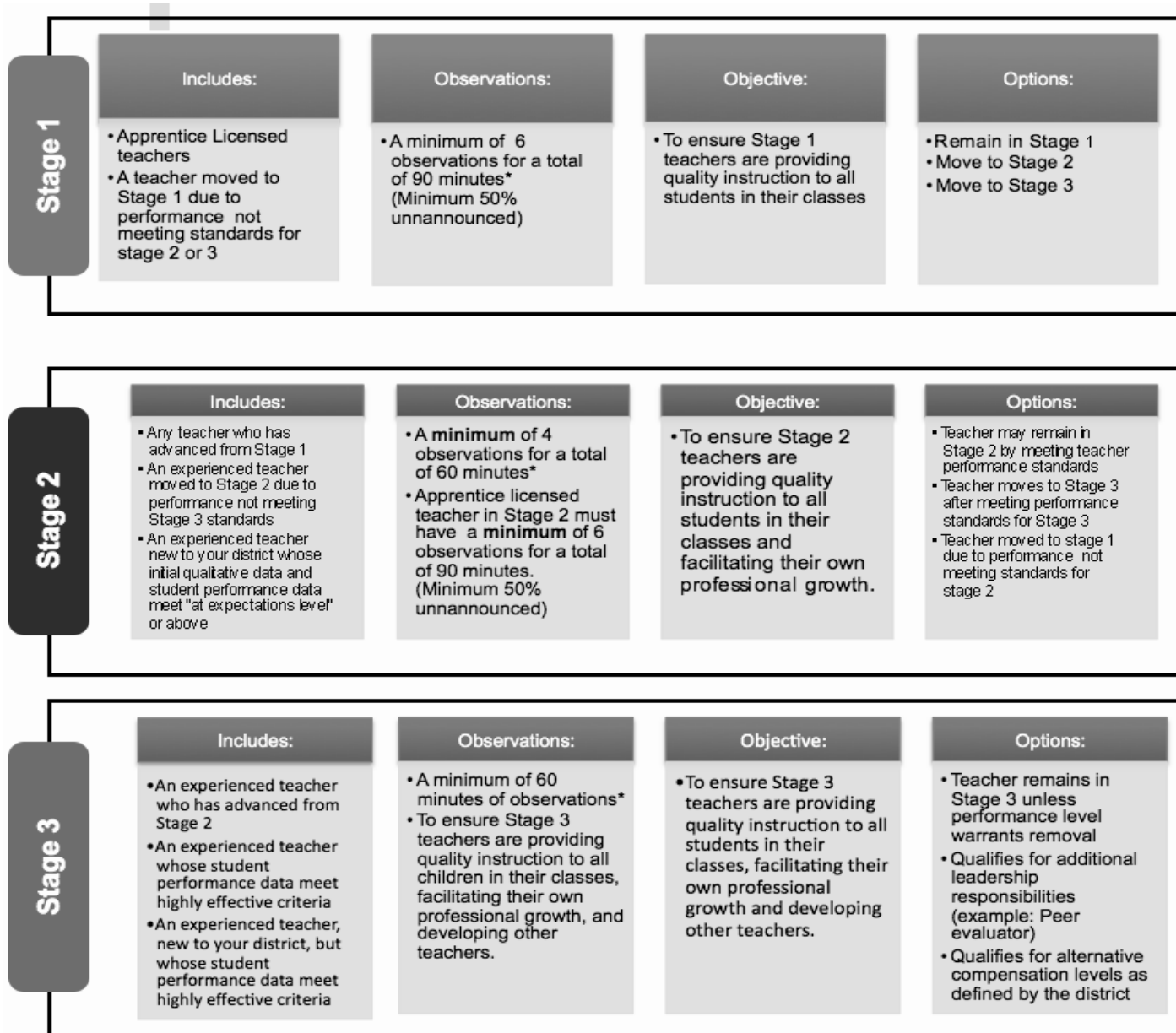
STAGE 3 FLOWCHART

NOTE: STAGE 3 INCORPORATES OBSERVATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF STAGE 2 AND ADDS TEACHER LEADERSHIP COMPONENTS



# APPENDIX C

## TIGER Stages Flowchart



APPENDIX D

TIGER Teacher Reflection Growth Plan

DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION					
Component 1a: Knowledge of the Learning Process					
Element: Knowledge of the learning process					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Knowledge of the learning process</b>	Teacher sees no value in understanding how students learn and does not seek such information.	Teacher recognizes the value of knowing how students learn, but this knowledge is limited or outdated.	Teacher's knowledge of how students learn is accurate and current. Teacher applies this knowledge to the class as a whole and to groups of students.	Teacher displays extensive and subtle understanding of how students learn and applies this knowledge to individual students.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretest or diagnostic data for class and students</li> <li>• Grouping done based upon data</li> <li>• Collection of data (notebooks, etc.)</li> <li>• Teacher and/or school designed process for assessment</li> <li>• Teacher designed opportunities for student self-assessment</li> <li>• Lesson plans accommodate various learning styles</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 1A POINTS</b>					4
DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION					
Component 1b: Setting Instructional Outcomes					
Elements: Value, sequence, and alignment • Suitability for diverse learners					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Value, sequence, and alignment</b>	Outcomes represent low expectations for students and lack of rigor. They do not reflect important learning in the discipline or a connection to a sequence of learning.	Outcomes represent moderately high expectations and rigor. Some reflect important learning in the discipline and at least some connection to a sequence of learning.	Most outcomes represent high expectations and rigor and important learning in the discipline. They are connected to a sequence of learning.	All outcomes represent high expectations and rigor and important learning in the discipline. They are connected to a sequence of learning both in the discipline and in related disciplines.	



<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning documentation across the curriculum</li> <li>• Collection of data</li> <li>• Pretest or diagnostic for class and students</li> <li>• Real world application,</li> <li>• Connection to prior and future learning opportunities</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Suitability for diverse learners including students' interests, cultural heritage, levels of learning</b>	Outcomes are not suitable for the class or are not based on any assessment of student needs.	Most of the outcomes are suitable for most of the students in the class based on global assessments of student learning.	Most of the outcomes are suitable for all students in the class and are based on evidence of student proficiency. However, the needs of some individual students may not be accommodated.	Outcomes are based on a comprehensive assessment of student learning and take into account the varying needs of individual students or groups.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content of lesson reflects student need; 1) New knowledge; 2) Deeper learning; 3) Application of learning</li> <li>• Student grouping</li> <li>• Display representing cultural diversity</li> <li>• Collection of data</li> <li>• Student and parent surveys</li> <li>• Parent involvement activities</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 1B POINTS</b>					8
<b>Domain 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION</b> <b>Component 1c: Designing Coherent Instruction</b> <b>Element: Learning activities</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>				
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>Learning activities</b>	Learning activities are not suitable to students or to instructional outcomes and are not designed to engage students in active intellectual activity.	Only some of the learning activities are suitable to students or to the instructional outcomes. Some represent a moderate cognitive challenge, but with no differentiation for different students.	All of the learning activities are suitable to students or to the instructional outcomes, and most represent significant cognitive challenge, with some differentiation for different groups of students.	Learning activities are highly suitable to diverse learners and support the instructional outcomes. They are all designed to engage students in high-level cognitive activity and are differentiated, as appropriate, for individual learners.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of data</li> <li>• Real world application</li> <li>• Formative instructional practices (differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, individual learning plans, interventions, accommodations)</li> <li>• Alignment to grade level standards</li> <li>• Connection to prior and future learning opportunities across the curriculum</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning activities encourage or allow for multiple student solutions</li> <li>• Knowledge of vertical alignment of standards</li> </ul>					
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 1C POINTS</b>					4
<b>DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION</b>					
<b>Component 1d: Designing Student Assessments</b>					
<b>Element: Design of formative assessments</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>				
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>Design of formative assessments</b>	Teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit.	Approach to the use of formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes.	Teacher has a well-developed strategy to using formative assessment and has designed particular approaches to be used.	Approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student as well as teacher use of the assessment information.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of data</li> <li>• Pretest or diagnostic data for class and students</li> <li>• Grouping done based upon data</li> <li>• Teacher and/or school designed process for assessment</li> <li>• Teacher designed opportunities for student self-assessment</li> <li>• Higher order questioning</li> <li>• Evidence of data analysis and use of to impact instruction</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 1D POINTS</b>					4

Domain 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Component 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport					
Elements: Teacher interaction with students					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Teacher interaction with students</b>	Teacher interaction with at least some students is negative, demeaning, sarcastic, or inappropriate to the age or culture of the students. Students exhibit disrespect for the teacher.	Teacher-student interactions are generally appropriate but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures. Students exhibit only minimal respect for the teacher.	Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the age and cultures of the students. Students exhibit respect for the teacher.	Teacher interactions with students reflect genuine respect and caring for individuals as well as groups of students. Students appear to trust the teacher with sensitive information.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environment of mutual respect</li> <li>Acceptance of diverse learners</li> <li>Positive reinforcement and effective redirection</li> <li>Handles discipline discreetly/respectfully</li> <li>Ratio of positive to negative interactions</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 2A POINTS</b>					4
Domain 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Component 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning					
Element: Importance of the content					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Importance of the content</b>	Teacher or students convey a negative attitude toward the content, suggesting that it is not important or has been mandated by others.	Teacher communicates importance of the work but with little conviction and only minimal apparent buy-in by the students.	Teacher conveys genuine enthusiasm for the content, and students demonstrate consistent commitment to its value.	Students demonstrate through their active participation, curiosity, and taking initiative that they value the importance of the content.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear expectations for learning are posted or stated (why is this important?)</li> <li>Teacher brings positive energy to the lesson</li> <li>Active student participation</li> <li>Real world application</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 2B POINTS</b>					4

<b>DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT</b>					
<b>Component 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures</b>					
<b>Elements: Management of instructional groups • Management of transitions • Management of materials and supplies</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>				<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	
<b>Management of instructional groups</b>	Students not working with the teacher are not productively engaged in learning.	Students in only some groups are productively engaged in learning while unsupervised by the teacher.	Small-group work is well organized, and most students are productively engaged in learning while unsupervised by the teacher.	Small-group work is well organized, and students are productively engaged at all times, with students assuming responsibility for productivity.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct facilitation of learning</li> <li>• Effective routines are established</li> <li>• Teacher engages all students</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Management of transitions</b>	Transitions are chaotic, with much time lost between activities or lesson segments.	Only some transitions are efficient, resulting in some loss of instructional time.	Transitions occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.	Transitions are seamless, with students assuming responsibility in ensuring their efficient operation.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective routines are established and timely</li> <li>• Transitions are efficient with little loss of instructional time</li> <li>• Student initiated transitions</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Management of materials and supplies</b>	Materials and supplies are - handled inefficiently, resulting in significant loss of instructional time.	Routines for handling materials and supplies function moderately well, but with some loss of instructional time.	Routines for handling materials and supplies occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.	Routines for handling materials and supplies are seamless, with students assuming some responsibility for smooth operation.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective routines are established</li> <li>• Materials readily available/accessible</li> <li>• Furniture/classroom arrangement supports instruction</li> <li>• Student initiated management of materials</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 2C POINTS</b>					12

DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Component 2e: Organizing Physical Space					
Element: Safety and accessibility					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Safety and accessibility</b>	The classroom is unsafe, or learning is not accessible to some students.	The classroom is safe, and at least essential learning is accessible to most students.	The classroom is safe, and learning is equally accessible to all students.	The classroom is safe, and students themselves ensure that all learning is equally accessible to all students.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom culture and design/arrangement accommodates instruction</li> <li>Adheres to safety policies/procedures</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 2E POINTS</b>					4

<b>DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION</b>					
<b>Component 3a: Communicating with Students</b>					
<b>Elements: Expectations for learning and achievement • Directions, procedures, and explanations of content • Use of oral and written language</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>L E V E L   O F   P E R F O R M A N C E</b>				<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	
<b>Expectations for learning and achievement</b>	Teacher's purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students. Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey low expectations for at least some students.	Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success. Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey only modest expectations for student learning and achievement.	Teacher's purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is situated within broader learning. Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for most students.	Teacher makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, including where it is situated within broader learning, linking that purpose to student interests. Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for all students. Students appear to have internalized these expectations.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real world application</li> <li>• Connection to prior and future learning opportunities across the curriculum</li> <li>• Alignment to standards</li> <li>• Data collection and analysis to impact instruction</li> <li>• Knowledge of vertical alignment to standards</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Directions, procedures, and explanations of content</b>	Teacher's directions and procedures are confusing to students. Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clarified after initial student confusion. Teacher's explanation of the content is uneven; some is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students. Teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students' knowledge and experience.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students and anticipate possible student misunderstanding. Teacher's explanation of content is imaginative and connects with students' knowledge and experience. Students contribute to explaining concepts to their peers.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, effective procedures are established</li> <li>• Teacher vocabulary is appropriate/student friendly</li> <li>• Effective use of verbal and nonverbal strategies</li> <li>• Directions/procedures are relevant to student experiences</li> <li>• Imaginative presentation of content</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			

<b>Use of oral and written language</b>	Teacher's spoken language is inaudible, or written language is illegible. Spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax. Vocabulary may be inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly, leaving students confused.	Teacher's spoken language is audible, and written language is legible. Both are used correctly and conform to standard English. Vocabulary is correct but limited or is not appropriate to the students' ages or backgrounds.	Teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct and conforms to standard English. Vocabulary is appropriate to the students' ages and interests.	Teacher's spoken and written language is correct and conforms to standard English. It is also expressive, with well-chosen vocabulary that enriches the lesson. Teacher finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher vocabulary is appropriate for student ages</li> <li>• Evidence of language rich classroom</li> <li>• Correct, verbal and written language</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 3A POINTS</b>					12
<b>DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION</b>  <b>Component 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b> <b>Elements: Quality of questions • Student participation</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>				<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	
<b>Quality of questions</b>	Teacher's questions are virtually all of poor quality, with low cognitive challenge and single correct responses, and they are asked in rapid succession.	Teacher's questions are a combination of low and high quality, posed in rapid succession. Only some invite a thoughtful response.	Most of the teacher's questions are of high quality. Adequate time is provided for students to respond.	Teacher's questions are of uniformly high quality, with adequate time for students to respond. Students formulate many questions.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher questions are at varied levels</li> <li>• Uses wait time when calling on students</li> <li>• Students initiate questions</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Student participation</b>	A few students dominate the discussion.	Teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, but with only limited success.	Teacher successfully engages all students in the discussion.	Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routines and student responsibilities are established and timely</li> <li>• Positive environment for student participation</li> <li>• Peer to peer positive feedback to peer responses</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 3B POINTS</b>					8

**DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION**

**Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning**

**Elements: Activities and assignments • Grouping of students • Instructional materials and resources • Structure and pacing**

ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Activities and assignments</b>	Activities and assignments are inappropriate for students' age or background. Students are not mentally engaged in them.	Activities and assignments are appropriate to some students and engage them mentally, but others are not engaged.	Most activities and assignments are appropriate to students, and almost all students are cognitively engaged in exploring content.	All students are cognitively engaged in the activities and assignments in their exploration of content. Students initiate or adapt activities and projects to enhance their understanding.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project based learning</li> <li>• Student performance demonstrates different levels of rigor (group or individual processing, cognitive engagement with content, etc.)</li> <li>• Real world application</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Grouping of students</b>	Instructional groups are inappropriate to the students or to the instructional outcomes.	Instructional groups are only partially appropriate to the students or only moderately successful in advancing the instructional outcomes of the lesson.	Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the students or to the instructional purposes of the lesson.	Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the students or to the instructional purposes of the lesson. Students take the initiative to influence the formation or adjustment of instructional groups.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grouping based on data</li> <li>• Instructional groups are appropriate</li> <li>• Demonstrating the application of instruction (doing to learn)</li> <li>• Self monitoring of student product</li> <li>• Active listening, group decision making, communication skills, leadership</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			



<b>Instructional materials and resources</b>	Instructional materials and resources are unsuitable to the instructional purposes or do not engage students mentally.	Instructional materials and resources are only partially suitable to the instructional purposes, or students are only partially mentally engaged with them.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally. Students initiate the choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance their learning.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of materials/adaptation of materials</li> <li>• Student generated materials and resources</li> <li>• Use of technology</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Structure and pacing</b>	The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed, or both.	The lesson has a recognizable structure, although it is not uniformly maintained throughout the lesson. Pacing of the lesson is inconsistent.	The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is generally appropriate.	The lesson's structure is highly coherent, allowing for reflection and closure. Pacing of the lesson is appropriate for all students.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimal time on appropriate task</li> <li>• Coherent structure</li> <li>• Clear, effective, and established routines</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 3C POINTS</b>					16

<b>DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION</b>					
<b>Component 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction</b>					
<b>Elements: Assessment criteria • Monitoring of student learning • Feedback to students • Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress</b>					
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>				<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>	
<b>Assessment criteria</b>	Students are not aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.	Students know some of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.	Students are fully aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.	Students are fully aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated and have contributed to the development of the criteria.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are aware of the criteria for evaluation (student conferencing, rubrics, checklists)</li> <li>• Students self assess</li> <li>• Student generated rubrics</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Monitoring of student learning</b>	Teacher does not monitor student learning in the curriculum.	Teacher monitors the progress of the class as a whole but elicits no diagnostic information.	Teacher monitors the progress of groups of students in the curriculum, making limited use of diagnostic prompts to elicit information.	Teacher actively and systematically elicits diagnostic information from individual students regarding their understanding and monitors the progress of individual students.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continual progress monitoring to inform instruction</li> <li>• Use of formative assessment</li> <li>• Teacher and/or school designed process for assessment</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Feedback to students</b>	Teacher's feedback to students is of poor quality and not provided in a timely manner.	Teacher's feedback to students is uneven, and its timeliness is inconsistent.	Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality.	Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality, and students make use of the feedback in their learning.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student conferencing</li> <li>• Teacher accommodates and elicits student questions</li> <li>• Teacher provides specific feedback</li> <li>• Facilitation of inquiry strategies</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			

<b>Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress</b>	Students do not engage in self-assessment or monitoring of progress.	Students occasionally assess the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance.	Students frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance.	Students not only frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards but also make active use of that information in their learning.		
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varied tools for self- assessment (data folder, tracking log, etc.)</li> <li>Data collection</li> <li>Progress monitoring</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed				
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 3D POINTS</b>					16	
<b>DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION</b>  <b>Component 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness</b> <b>Elements: Response to students</b>						
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>					<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>		
<b>Response to students</b>	Teacher ignores or brushes aside students' questions or interests.	Teacher attempts to accommodate students' questions or interests, although the pacing of the lesson is disrupted.	Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions or interests.	Teacher seizes a major opportunity to enhance learning, building on student interests or a spontaneous event.		
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximizes teachable moments</li> <li>Looks for and implements opportunities for incidental/spontaneous learning</li> <li>Connect those incidental/spontaneous learning to standards</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed				
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 3E POINTS</b>					4	

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES					
Component 4a: Reflecting on Teaching					
Elements: Accuracy and use in future teaching					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				POINTS
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	
<b>Accuracy and use in future teaching</b>	Teacher does not know whether a lesson was effective or achieved its instructional outcomes, or teacher profoundly misjudges the success of a lesson. Teacher has no suggestions for how a lesson could be improved another time the lesson is taught.	Teacher has a generally accurate impression of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which instructional outcomes were met. Teacher makes general suggestions about how a lesson could be improved another time the lesson is taught.	Teacher makes an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes and can cite general references to support the judgment. Teacher makes a few specific suggestions of what could be tried another time the lesson is taught.	Teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes, citing many specific examples from the lesson and weighing the relative strengths of each. Drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, teacher offers specific alternative actions, complete with the probable success of different courses of action.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher can extend learning, provide more rigor, or re-teach as needed</li> <li>Use of student performance information</li> <li>Teacher reflection of instruction</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 4A POINTS</b>					4

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES					
Component 4b: Communicating with Families					
Elements: Information about individual students					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	POINTS
<b>Information about individual students</b>	Teacher provides minimal information to families about individual students, or the communication is inappropriate to the cultures of the families. Teacher does not respond, or responds insensitively, to family concerns about students.	Teacher adheres to the school's required procedures for communicating with families. Responses to family concerns are minimal or may reflect occasional insensitivity to cultural norms.	Teacher communicates with families about students' progress on a regular basis, respecting cultural norms, and is available as needed to respond to family concerns.	Teacher provides information to families frequently on student progress, with students contributing to the design of the system. Response to family concerns is handled with great professional and cultural sensitivity.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate communication with parents taking into consideration cultural differences and student/parent needs</li> <li>• Analyzes and incorporates individual student data</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 4B POINTS</b>					4
DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES					
Component 4c: Participating in a Professional Community					
Elements: Relationships with colleagues and receptivity to feedback from colleagues					
ELEMENT	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
	UNSATISFACTORY 1	BASIC 2	PROFICIENT 3	DISTINGUISHED 4	POINTS
<b>Professional relationships with colleagues and receptivity to feedback from colleagues</b>	Teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or counterproductive toward the culture of the school. Teacher resists feedback on teaching performance from either supervisors or more experienced colleagues.	Teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires. Teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback on teaching performance from both supervisors and professional colleagues.	Professional relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation to help advance the academic culture of the school. Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.	Professional relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation to help advance the academic culture/performance of the school. Teacher takes initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty and community. Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberate contributions to team/school goals</li> <li>• Teacher actively seeks professional development</li> <li>• Looks for opportunities to share newly learned strategies or information to enhance colleagues' proficiency.</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			

					<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 4C POINTS</b>	4
<b>DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>						
<b>Component 4d: Growing and Developing Professionally</b>						
<b>Elements: Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill</b>						
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>					<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>		
<b>Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill</b>	Teacher engages in no professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skill.	Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.	Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.	Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research.		
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliberate contributions to team/school goals</li> <li>Teacher actively seeks professional development</li> <li>Implements newly developed skills and monitors for effectiveness</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed				
					<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 4D POINTS</b>	4
<b>DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>						
<b>Component 4e: Showing Professionalism</b>						
<b>Elements: Integrity and ethical conduct • Decision making • Compliance with school and district regulations and handling of non-instructional records</b>						
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</b>					<b>POINTS</b>
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY 1</b>	<b>BASIC 2</b>	<b>PROFICIENT 3</b>	<b>DISTINGUISHED 4</b>		
<b>Integrity and ethical conduct</b>	Teacher displays dishonesty in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.	Teacher is honest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.	Teacher displays high standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.	Teacher can be counted on to hold the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality and takes a leadership role with colleagues.		
<b>Element Indicators:</b>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays honesty, maintains confidentiality</li> <li>Adheres to code of conduct</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed				

<b>Decision making</b>	Teacher makes decisions and recommendations based on self-serving interests.	Teacher's decisions and recommendations are based on limited though genuinely professional considerations.	Teacher maintains an open mind and participates in team or departmental decision-making.	Teacher takes a leadership role in team or departmental decision-making and helps ensure that such decisions are based on the highest professional standards.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercises professional judgment</li> <li>Makes decisions based on what is best for students</li> <li>Makes decisions to promote positive school/community culture</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>Compliance with school and district regulations and handling of non-instructional records</b>	Teacher does not comply with school and district regulations. Teacher's records for non-instructional activities are in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.	Teacher complies minimally with school and district regulations, doing just enough to get by. Teacher's records for non-instructional activities are adequate, but they require frequent monitoring to avoid errors.	Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations. Teacher's system for maintaining information on non-instructional activities is fully effective.	Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations, taking a leadership role with colleagues. Teacher's system for maintaining information on non-instructional activities is highly effective, and students contribute to its maintenance.	
<b>Element Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher complies with school and district regulations</li> </ul>		<b>Evidences/Other Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Review; More information needed			
<b>TOTAL COMPONENT 4D POINTS</b>					12

Domain	Points	Comments
<p><b>Domain 1 Planning and Preparation</b></p> <p>Total possible points = 20</p> <p>Range of Proficiency to Distinguished = 15 - 20</p>		
<p><b>Domain 2: The Classroom Environment</b></p> <p>Total possible points = 36</p> <p>Range of Proficiency to Distinguished = 27 - 36</p>		
<p><b>Domain 3: Instruction</b></p> <p>Total possible points = 56</p> <p>Range of Proficiency to Distinguished = 42 - 56</p>		
<p><b>Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities</b></p> <p>Total possible points = 28</p> <p>Range of Proficiency to Distinguished = 21 - 28</p>		
<p><b>Total Points</b></p>		



APPENDIX E

TIGER Walk-through Form

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Look Fors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for Observed	Evidence	Comments
<b>Planning and Preparation</b>			
Connection to prior and future learning opportunities.			
Formative instructional practices.			
Teacher designed opportunities for student self-assessment.			
<b>Classroom Environment</b>			
Positive reinforcement and effective redirection.			
Clear expectations for learning are posted or stated.			
Teacher brings positive energy to the lesson.			

Effective routines are established.			
Transitions are efficient with little loss of instructional time.			
Furniture arrangement supports instruction.			
Teacher responds to misbehavior.			
Rules and expectations are visible.			
<b>Instruction</b>			
Teacher vocabulary is appropriate/student friendly.			
Directions/procedures are relevant to student experiences.			
Teacher questions are at varied levels.			
Real world application.			

Student performance demonstrates different levels of rigor.			
Demonstrating the application of instruction.			
Various resources used.			
Pacing of lesson is appropriate.			
Students are aware of the criteria for evaluation.			
Use of formative assessments.			
Teacher accommodates and elicits student questions.			
Varied tools for self-assessment.			
Other Observations as Identified in the Baseline Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan			
Other Observations Noteworthy			

APPENDIX F

TEAM Educator Observation Form

**TEAM Educator Observation Form**

Observer \_\_\_\_\_ Announced  Unannounced

Teacher Observed \_\_\_\_\_ Formal (lesson-length)  Informal (15-mins)

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Designing and Planning Instruction</b>	<b>Observer Score</b>	<b>Self Score</b>
Instructional Plans (IP)		
Student Work (SW)		
Assessment (AS)		
<b>Learning Environment</b>	<b>Observer Score</b>	<b>Self Score</b>
Expectations (EX)		
Managing Student Behavior (MSB)		
Environment (ENV)		
Respectful Culture (RC)		
<b>Instruction</b>	<b>Observer Score</b>	<b>Self Score</b>
Standards and Objectives ((SO)		
Motivating Students (MS)		
Presenting Instructional Content (PIC)		
Lesson Structure and Pacing ((LS)		
Activities and Materials (ACT)		
Questioning (QU)		
Academic Feedback (FEED)		
Grouping Students (GRP)		
Teacher Content Knowledge (TCK)		
Teacher Knowledge of Students (TKS)		
Thinking (TH)		
Problem Solving (PS)		

■ **Reinforcement Objective:**

**Indicator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**

■ **Refinement Objective:**





**Indicator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**





## APPENDIX G

### TEAM Educator Rubric

#### Instruction

	Significantly Above Expectations (5)	At Expectations (3)	Significantly Below Expectations (1)
<b>Standards and Objectives</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All learning objectives and state content standards are explicitly communicated.</li> <li>Sub-objectives are aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's major objective.</li> <li>Learning objectives are: (a) consistently connected to what students have previously learned, (b) know from life experiences, and (c) integrated with other disciplines.</li> <li>Expectations for student performance are clear, demanding, and high.</li> <li>State standards are displayed and referenced throughout the lesson.</li> <li>There is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most learning objectives and state content standards are communicated.</li> <li>Sub-objectives are mostly aligned to the lesson's major objective.</li> <li>Learning objectives are connected to what students have previously learned.</li> <li>Expectations for student performance are clear.</li> <li>State standards are displayed.</li> <li>There is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few learning objectives and state content standards are communicated.</li> <li>Sub-objectives are inconsistently aligned to the lesson's major objective.</li> <li>Learning objectives are rarely connected to what students have previously learned.</li> <li>Expectations for student performance are vague.</li> <li>State standards are displayed.</li> <li>There is evidence that few students demonstrate mastery of the objective.</li> </ul>
<b>Motivating Students</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher consistently organizes the content so that it is personally meaningful and relevant to students.</li> <li>The teacher consistently develops learning experiences where inquiry, curiosity, and exploration are valued.</li> <li>The teacher regularly reinforces and rewards effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher sometimes organizes the content so that it is personally meaningful and relevant to students.</li> <li>The teacher sometimes develops learning experiences where inquiry, curiosity, and exploration are valued.</li> <li>The teacher sometimes reinforces and rewards effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher rarely organizes the content so that it is personally meaningful and relevant to students.</li> <li>The teacher rarely develops learning experiences where inquiry, curiosity, and exploration are valued.</li> <li>The teacher rarely reinforces and rewards effort.</li> </ul>
<b>Presenting Instructional Content</b>  	<p>Presentation of content always includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visuals that establish the purpose of the lesson, preview the organization of the lesson, and include internal summaries of the lesson;</li> <li>examples, illustrations, analogies, and labels for new concepts and ideas;</li> <li>modeling by the teacher to demonstrate his or her performance expectations;</li> <li>concise communication;</li> <li>logical sequencing and segmenting;</li> <li>all essential information;</li> <li>no irrelevant, confusing, or non-essential information.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation of content most of the time includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visuals that establish the purpose of the lesson, preview the organization of the lesson, and include internal summaries of the lesson;</li> <li>examples, illustrations, analogies, and labels for new concepts and ideas;</li> <li>modeling by the teacher to demonstrate his or her performance expectations;</li> <li>concise communication;</li> <li>logical sequencing and segmenting;</li> <li>all essential information.;</li> <li>no irrelevant, confusing, or non-essential information.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation of content rarely includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visuals that establish the purpose of the lesson, preview the organization of the lesson, and include internal summaries of the lesson;</li> <li>examples, illustrations, analogies, and labels for new concepts and ideas;</li> <li>modeling by the teacher to demonstrate his or her performance expectations;</li> <li>concise communication;</li> <li>logical sequencing and segmenting;</li> <li>all essential information;</li> <li>no irrelevant, confusing, or non-essential information.</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson Structure and Pacing</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lesson starts promptly.</li> <li>The lesson's structure is coherent, with a beginning, middle, end, and time for reflection.</li> <li>Pacing is brisk and provides many opportunities for individual students who progress at different learning rates.</li> <li>Routines for distributing materials are seamless.</li> <li>No instructional time is lost during transitions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lesson starts promptly.</li> <li>The lesson's structure is coherent, with a beginning, middle, and end.</li> <li>Pacing is appropriate and sometimes provides opportunities for students who progress at different learning rates.</li> <li>Routines for distributing materials are efficient.</li> <li>Little instructional time is lost during transitions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lesson does not start promptly.</li> <li>The lesson has a structure, but may be missing closure or introductory elements.</li> <li>Pacing is appropriate for less than half of the students and rarely provides opportunities for students who progress at different learning rates.</li> <li>Routines for distributing materials are inefficient.</li> <li>Considerable time is lost during transitions.</li> </ul>




	Significantly Above Expectations (5)	At Expectations (3)	Significantly Below Expectations (1)
<b>Activities and Materials</b>  <div style="border: 2px solid black; width: 50px; height: 30px; margin: 10px 0;"></div>	<p>Activities and materials include all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the lesson objectives;</li> <li>• are challenging;</li> <li>• sustain students' attention;</li> <li>• elicit a variety of thinking;</li> <li>• provide time for reflection;</li> <li>• are relevant to students' lives;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for student-to-student interaction;</li> <li>• induce student curiosity and suspense;</li> <li>• provide students with choices;</li> <li>• incorporate multimedia and technology; and</li> <li>• incorporate resources beyond the school curriculum texts (e.g., teacher-made materials, manipulatives, resources from museums, cultural centers, etc).</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, sometimes activities are game-like, involve simulations, require creating products, and demand self-direction and self-monitoring.</li> </ul>	<p>Activities and materials include most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the lesson objectives;</li> <li>• are challenging;</li> <li>• sustain students' attention;</li> <li>• elicit a variety of thinking;</li> <li>• provide time for reflection;</li> <li>• are relevant to students' lives;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for student to student interaction;</li> <li>• induce student curiosity and suspense;</li> <li>• provide students with choices;</li> <li>• incorporate multimedia and technology; and</li> <li>• incorporate resources beyond the school curriculum texts (e.g., teacher made materials, manipulatives, resources from museums, cultural centers, etc).</li> </ul>	<p>Activities and materials include few of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the lesson objectives;</li> <li>• are challenging;</li> <li>• sustain students' attention;</li> <li>• elicit a variety of thinking;</li> <li>• provide time for reflection;</li> <li>• are relevant to students' lives;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for student to student interaction;</li> <li>• induce student curiosity and suspense;</li> <li>• provide students with choices;</li> <li>• incorporate multimedia and technology; and</li> <li>• incorporate resources beyond the school curriculum texts (e.g., teacher made materials, manipulatives, resources from museums, etc).</li> </ul>
<b>Questioning</b>  <div style="border: 2px solid black; width: 50px; height: 30px; margin: 10px 0;"></div>	<p>Teacher questions are varied and high quality, providing a balanced mix of question types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o knowledge and comprehension;</li> <li>o application and analysis; and</li> <li>o creation and evaluation.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are consistently purposeful and coherent.</li> <li>• A high frequency of questions is asked.</li> <li>• Questions are consistently sequenced with attention to the instructional goals.</li> <li>• Questions regularly require active responses (e.g., whole class signaling, choral responses, written and shared responses, or group and individual answers).</li> <li>• Wait time (3-5 seconds) is consistently provided.</li> <li>• The teacher calls on volunteers and nonvolunteers, and a balance of students based on ability and sex.</li> <li>• Students generate questions that lead to further inquiry and self-directed learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher questions are varied and high quality providing for some, but not all, question types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o knowledge and comprehension;</li> <li>o application and analysis; and</li> <li>o creation and evaluation.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are usually purposeful and coherent.</li> <li>• A moderate frequency of questions asked.</li> <li>• Questions are sometimes sequenced with attention to the instructional goals.</li> <li>• Questions sometimes require active responses (e.g., whole class signaling, choral responses, or group and individual answers).</li> <li>• Wait time is sometimes provided.</li> <li>• The teacher calls on volunteers and nonvolunteers, and a balance of students based on ability and sex.</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher questions are inconsistent in quality and include few question types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o knowledge and comprehension;</li> <li>o application and analysis; and</li> <li>o creation and evaluation.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are random and lack coherence.</li> <li>• A low frequency of questions is asked.</li> <li>• Questions are rarely sequenced with attention to the instructional goals.</li> <li>• Questions rarely require active responses (e.g., whole class signaling, choral responses, or group and individual answers).</li> <li>• Wait time is inconsistently provided.</li> <li>• The teacher mostly calls on volunteers and high-ability students.</li> </ul>

	<b>Significantly Above Expectations (5)</b>	<b>At Expectations (3)</b>	<b>Significantly Below Expectations (1)</b>
<b>Academic Feedback</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written feedback is consistently academically focused, frequent, and high quality.</li> <li>• Feedback is frequently given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates to prompt student thinking, assess each student's progress, and provide individual feedback.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is regularly used to monitor and adjust instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher engages students in giving specific and high-quality feedback to one another.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written feedback is mostly academically focused, frequent, and mostly high quality.</li> <li>• Feedback is sometimes given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates during instructional activities to support engagement, and monitor student work.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is sometimes used to monitor and adjust instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality and timeliness of feedback is inconsistent.</li> <li>• Feedback is rarely given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates during instructional activities, but monitors mostly behavior.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is rarely used to monitor or adjust instruction.</li> </ul>
<b>Grouping Students</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructional grouping arrangements (either whole class, small groups, pairs, individual; heterogeneous or homogenous ability) consistently maximize student understanding and learning efficiency.</li> <li>• All students in groups know their roles, responsibilities, and group work expectations.</li> <li>• All students participating in groups are held accountable for group work and individual work.</li> <li>• Instructional group composition is varied (e.g., race, gender, ability, and age) to best accomplish the goals of the lesson.</li> <li>• Instructional groups facilitate opportunities for students to set goals, reflect on, and evaluate their learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructional grouping arrangements (either whole class, small groups, pairs, individual; heterogeneous or homogenous ability) adequately enhance student understanding and learning efficiency.</li> <li>• Most students in groups know their roles, responsibilities, and group work expectations.</li> <li>• Most students participating in groups are held accountable for group work and individual work.</li> <li>• Instructional group composition is varied (e.g., race, gender, ability, and age) to most of the time, accomplish the goals of the lesson.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructional grouping arrangements (either whole class, small groups, pairs, individual; heterogeneous or homogenous ability) inhibit student understanding and learning efficiency.</li> <li>• Few students in groups know their roles, responsibilities, and group work expectations.</li> <li>• Few students participating in groups are held accountable for group work and individual work.</li> <li>• Instructional group composition remains unchanged irrespective of the learning and instructional goals of a lesson.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Content Knowledge</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher displays extensive content knowledge of all the subjects she or he teaches.</li> <li>• Teacher regularly implements a variety of subject-specific instructional strategies to enhance student content knowledge.</li> <li>• The teacher regularly highlights key concepts and ideas and uses them as bases to connect other powerful ideas.</li> <li>• Limited content is taught in sufficient depth to allow for the development of understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher displays accurate content knowledge of all the subjects he or she teaches.</li> <li>• Teacher sometimes implements subject-specific instructional strategies to enhance student content knowledge.</li> <li>• The teacher sometimes highlights key concepts and ideas and uses them as bases to connect other powerful ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher displays under-developed content knowledge in several subject areas.</li> <li>• Teacher rarely implements subject-specific instructional strategies to enhance student content knowledge.</li> <li>• Teacher does not understand key concepts and ideas in the discipline and therefore presents content in an unconnected way.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Knowledge of Students</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher practices display understanding of each student's anticipated learning difficulties.</li> <li>• Teacher practices regularly incorporate student interests and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Teacher regularly provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure children have the opportunity to master what is being taught.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher practices display understanding of some student anticipated learning difficulties.</li> <li>• Teacher practices sometimes incorporate student interests and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Teacher sometimes provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure children have the opportunity to master what is being taught.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher practices demonstrate minimal knowledge of students anticipated learning difficulties.</li> <li>• Teacher practices rarely incorporate student interests or cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Teacher practices demonstrate little differentiation of instructional methods or content.</li> </ul>





	<b>Significantly Above Expectations (5)</b>	<b>At Expectations (3)</b>	<b>Significantly Below Expectations (1)</b>
<b>Thinking</b>	<p>The teacher thoroughly teaches two or more types of thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analytical thinking, where students analyze, compare and contrast, and evaluate and explain information;</li> <li>practical thinking, where students use, apply, and implement what they learn in real-life scenarios;</li> <li>creative thinking, where students create, design, imagine, and suppose; and</li> <li>research-based thinking, where students explore and review a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems.</li> </ul> <p>The teacher provides opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generate a variety of ideas and alternatives;</li> <li>analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints; <u>and</u></li> <li>monitor their thinking to insure that they understand what they are learning, are attending to critical information, and are aware of the learning strategies that they are using and why.</li> </ul>	<p>The teacher thoroughly teaches one type of thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analytical thinking, where students analyze, compare and contrast, and evaluate and explain information;</li> <li>practical thinking, where students use, apply, and implement what they learn in real-life scenarios;</li> <li>creative thinking, where students create, design, imagine, and suppose; and</li> <li>research-based thinking, where students explore and review a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems.</li> </ul> <p>The teacher provides opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generate a variety of ideas and alternatives; and</li> <li>analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints.</li> </ul>	<p>The teacher implements no learning experiences that thoroughly teach any type of thinking.</p> <p>The teacher provides no opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generate a variety of ideas and alternatives; or</li> <li>analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints.</li> </ul>
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<p>The teacher implements activities that teach and reinforce three or more of the following problem-solving types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abstraction</li> <li>Categorization</li> <li>Drawing Conclusions/Justifying Solutions</li> <li>Predicting Outcomes</li> <li>Observing and Experimenting</li> <li>Improving Solutions</li> <li>Identifying Relevant/Irrelevant Information</li> <li>Generating Ideas</li> <li>Creating and Designing</li> </ul>	<p>The teacher implements activities that teach two of the following problem-solving types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abstraction</li> <li>Categorization</li> <li>Drawing Conclusions/Justifying Solution</li> <li>Predicting Outcomes</li> <li>Observing and Experimenting</li> <li>Improving Solutions</li> <li>Identifying Relevant/Irrelevant Information</li> <li>Generating Ideas</li> <li>Creating and Designing</li> </ul>	<p>The teacher implements no activities that teach the following problem-solving types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abstraction</li> <li>Categorization</li> <li>Drawing Conclusions/Justifying Solution</li> <li>Predicting Outcomes</li> <li>Observing and Experimenting</li> <li>Improving Solutions</li> <li>Identifying Relevant/Irrelevant Information</li> <li>Generating Ideas</li> <li>Creating and Designing</li> </ul>



## Planning

	<b>Significantly Above Expectations (5)</b>	<b>At Expectations (3)</b>	<b>Significantly Below Expectations (1)</b>
<b>Instructional Plans</b>  	<p>Instructional plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• measurable and explicit goals aligned to state content standards;</li> <li>• activities, materials, and assessments that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are aligned to state standards.</li> <li>○ are sequenced from basic to complex.</li> <li>○ build on prior student knowledge, are relevant to students' lives, and integrate other disciplines.</li> <li>○ provide appropriate time for student work, student reflection, and lesson and unit closure;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• evidence that plan is appropriate for the age, knowledge, and interests of all learners; and</li> <li>• evidence that the plan provides regular opportunities to accommodate individual student needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Instructional plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• goals aligned to state content standards;</li> <li>• activities, materials, and assessments that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are aligned to state standards.</li> <li>○ are sequenced from basic to complex.</li> <li>○ build on prior student knowledge.</li> <li>○ provide appropriate time for student work, and lesson and unit closure;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• evidence that plan is appropriate for the age, knowledge, and interests of most learners; and</li> <li>• evidence that the plan provides some opportunities to accommodate individual student needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Instructional plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few goals aligned to state content standards;</li> <li>• activities, materials, and assessments that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are rarely aligned to state standards.</li> <li>○ are rarely logically sequenced.</li> <li>○ rarely build on prior student knowledge</li> <li>○ inconsistently provide time for student work, and lesson and unit closure;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• little evidence that the plan is appropriate for the age, knowledge, or interests of the learners; and</li> <li>• little evidence that the plan provides some opportunities to accommodate individual student needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Work</b>  	<p>Assignments require students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organize, interpret, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information rather than reproduce it;</li> <li>• draw conclusions, make generalizations, and produce arguments that are supported through extended writing; and</li> <li>• connect what they are learning to experiences, observations, feelings, or situations significant in their daily lives both inside and outside of school.</li> </ul>	<p>Assignments require students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interpret information rather than reproduce it;</li> <li>• draw conclusions and support them through writing; and</li> <li>• connect what they are learning to prior learning and some life experiences.</li> </ul>	<p>Assignments require students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mostly reproduce information;</li> <li>• rarely draw conclusions and support them through writing; and</li> <li>• rarely connect what they are learning to prior learning or life experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>  	<p>Assessment Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are aligned with state content standards;</li> <li>• have clear measurement criteria;</li> <li>• measure student performance in more than three ways (e.g., in the form of a project, experiment, presentation, essay, short answer, or multiple choice test);</li> <li>• require extended written tasks;</li> <li>• are portfolio-based with clear illustrations of student progress toward state content standards; and</li> <li>• include descriptions of how assessment results will be used to inform future instruction.</li> </ul>	<p>Assessment Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are aligned with state content standards;</li> <li>• have measurement criteria;</li> <li>• measure student performance in more than two ways (e.g., in the form of a project, experiment, presentation, essay, short answer, or multiple choice test);</li> <li>• require written tasks; and</li> <li>• include performance checks throughout the school year.</li> </ul>	<p>Assessment Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are rarely aligned with state content standards;</li> <li>• have ambiguous measurement criteria;</li> <li>• measure student performance in less than two ways (e.g., in the form of a project, experiment, presentation, essay, short answer, or multiple choice test); and</li> <li>• include performance checks, although the purpose of these checks is not clear.</li> </ul>

## Environment

	Significantly Above Expectations (5)	At Expectations (3)	Significantly Below Expectations (1)
<b>Expectations</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher sets high and demanding academic expectations for every student.</li> <li>• Teacher encourages students to learn from mistakes.</li> <li>• Teacher creates learning opportunities where all students can experience success.</li> <li>• Students take initiative and follow through with their own work.</li> <li>• Teacher optimizes instructional time, teaches more material, and demands better performance from every student.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher sets high and demanding academic expectations for every student.</li> <li>• Teacher encourages students to learn from mistakes.</li> <li>• Teacher creates learning opportunities where most students can experience success.</li> <li>• Students complete their work according to teacher expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher expectations are not sufficiently high for every student.</li> <li>• Teacher creates an environment where mistakes and failure are not viewed as learning experiences.</li> <li>• Students demonstrate little or no pride in the quality of their work.</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Student Behavior</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are consistently well-behaved and on task.</li> <li>• Teacher and students establish clear rules for learning and behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher uses several techniques, such as social approval, contingent activities, and consequences, to maintain appropriate student behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher overlooks inconsequential behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher deals with students who have caused disruptions rather than the entire class.</li> <li>• The teacher attends to disruptions quickly and firmly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are mostly well-behaved and on task, some minor learning disruptions may occur.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes rules for learning and behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher uses some techniques, such as social approval, contingent activities, and consequences, to maintain appropriate student behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher overlooks some inconsequential behavior, but other times addresses it, stopping the lesson.</li> <li>• The teacher deals with students who have caused disruptions, yet sometimes he or she addresses the entire class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are not well-behaved and are often off task.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes few rules for learning and behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher uses few techniques to maintain appropriate student behavior.</li> <li>• The teacher cannot distinguish between inconsequential behavior and inappropriate behavior.</li> <li>• Disruptions frequently interrupt instruction.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>  	<p>The classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• welcomes all members and guests.</li> <li>• is organized and understandable to all students.</li> <li>• supplies, equipment, and resources are easily and readily accessible.</li> <li>• displays student work that frequently changes.</li> <li>• is arranged to promote individual and group learning.</li> </ul>	<p>The classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• welcomes most members and guests.</li> <li>• is organized and understandable to most students.</li> <li>• supplies, equipment, and resources are accessible.</li> <li>• displays student work.</li> <li>• is arranged to promote individual and group learning.</li> </ul>	<p>The classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is somewhat cold and uninviting.</li> <li>• is not well organized and understandable to students.</li> <li>• supplies, equipment, and resources are difficult to access.</li> <li>• does not display student work.</li> <li>• is not arranged to promote group learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Respectful Culture</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-student interactions demonstrate caring and respect for one another.</li> <li>• Students exhibit caring and respect for one another.</li> <li>• Teacher seeks out and is receptive to the interests and opinions of all students.</li> <li>• Positive relationships and interdependence characterize the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-student interactions are generally friendly, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures.</li> <li>• Students exhibit respect for the teacher, and are generally polite to each other.</li> <li>• Teacher is sometimes receptive to the interests and opinions of students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-student interactions are sometimes authoritarian, negative, or inappropriate.</li> <li>• Students exhibit disrespect for the teacher.</li> <li>• Student interaction is characterized by conflict, sarcasm, or put-downs.</li> <li>• Teacher is not receptive to interests and opinions of students.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX H

### Survey Instrument

This survey involves answering general demographic questions. It also contains questions regarding your perception about factors which contribute to the academic success of African American males in the Blount County Area. The survey takes at least 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is **voluntary**, and your responses will be completely **anonymous**. There are no consequences if you decide not to complete the survey.

1) What is your age?	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 31 - 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 41 - 50	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 - 60	<input type="checkbox"/> 61 – older
2) Are you male or female?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female				
3) How do you describe your ethnicity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
4) What is the highest level of education you have completed?	<input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED	<input type="checkbox"/> Associates Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Degree/Beyond	
5) Where do you live?	<input type="checkbox"/> Maryville (city)	<input type="checkbox"/> Maryville (county)	<input type="checkbox"/> Alcoa	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
6) How many years have you been a resident of Blount County?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 – 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 – 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 or more
<b>Please indicate your perception of each statement by checking the appropriate box.</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
7) The academic success of African American males is a societal problem that should be addressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8) Student behavior directly affects academic performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9) Compared to White males, African American males are as capable of achieving the same level of academic success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10) The academic achievement gap between racial groups can be lessened with effective programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate your perception of each statement by checking the appropriate box.</b> <i>In order to reach academic success, African American males must:</i>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
11) Have self-worth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12) Have highly effective teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13) Have parents that value education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14) Believe they can complete tasks as well as others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15) Have parents who communicate consistently with teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16) Have access to resources that address deficiencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate your perception of each statement by checking the appropriate box.</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
17) Believe their opinion is important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18) Have teachers that care about them emotionally, physically, and mentally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19) Feel confident when participating in discussions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20) Have parents that will explain possible challenges to being an African American males.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21) Attend a school which values diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22) Learn to respond respectfully to racist / prejudice comments or actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23) Have an opportunity to participate in community activities during non-academic hours (extra-curricular activities).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24) Learn to avoid inappropriate situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25) Have parents who encourage study time and completion of school assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26) Feel proud to be a member of their racial group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27) Have access to appropriate medical care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28) In three sentences or less, describe what you believe is the root cause of the academic achievement gap between White males and Black males?					
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29) In three sentences or less, describe how schools have contributed to the low academic performance of African American males?

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30) In three sentences or less, describe what you believe can be done to improve the academic performance of African American males?

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## APPENDIX I

### Reflections from African American Males

Ronald S. Coffin

I was born on August 23, 1947, in Maryville, Tennessee, at Blount Memorial Hospital. I am the third of four sons born to the union of Myrtle Porter and George Harold Coffin Sr. My parents believe strongly in education and stressed it continuously from my earliest remembrances. They, their siblings, their parents and grandparents were members of St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church which was about teaching and encouraging learning as well as saving souls. My father was the oldest of seven siblings. His grandfather, King Coffin and great-grandmother, Cynthia Coffin were born slaves. My mother was the youngest of eight siblings. Her grandmother, Annie Parham was born a slave. My father's, Roscoe Coffin worked at Alcoa Aluminum Company in North Carolina and in Alcoa. He died at the age of 42, when my father was 15 years old. My father worked to help his mother, Julia Belle "Mama" Coffin, raise and support his brothers and sisters. He completed his school education and joined the Civilian Conservation Corporation, CCC where he learned typing, short-hand, how to prepare wills and do taxes. He also taught other Blacks reading, writing, and arithmetic. My mother graduated from Hale High School and earned a diploma from Grady Cosmetology School in Atlanta, GA. She worked a short time in this profession until she started having children. My father worked at Alcoa Aluminum Company for 43 years. My mother was an avid reader and she read everything from newspapers, novels (of course the Bible), and poetry, journals etc. I know this is where I get my love of reading. Both parents worked diligently in the church. My dad was a trustee and my mother was a Sunday Schools teacher. They were also very involves in the community and the struggle for Civil Rights for all citizens. They were members of the Hale PTA, the NAACP (my father was a charter member and president of the local branch), and a Group of Black and White citizens and Clergy (who many times had to meet in secret due to threats and a hostile racial climate) to strategize a pray

about how to support and advocate for equality and a more perfect “Union”. It was in this environment of segregation, racial polarization and the balance of racial hostility on the one hand and racial pride on the other that I was reared in Maryville, TN. Education was stressed in my home, in my church and at the segregation W.J. Hale School that I attended (up through my sophomore year). I was taught that I was not inferior to anyone, even if I was being taught subjects out of books that was 5 or 10 years older than the ones that those used by White students. It was indoctrinated in me that no amount of segregation, oppression, racial hatred, and denial of equal opportunity would be an acceptable excuse for failure. In 1963, I was one of four Black students that integrated Maryville High School. My father did not ask me if I wanted to integrate; he told me that I was going to Maryville High School even if I had to go by myself. My two oldest brothers were students at Tennessee State University in Nashville so the task of integration was handed to me. I did not seek it or choose it and I am thankful that the other Black Students sis not has a choice either. It was a very difficult and stressful time. The year 1963 was marked by bombings, assassinations, and violent opposition to Civil Rights advocates. The integration of Maryville High School was preceded by the imprisonment of Dr. King, race riots in Cambridge Maryland, Governor Wallace’s resistance to the admission of Vivian Malone and James hood to the University of Alabama, the assassination of NAACP leader, Medgar Evers, the bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Church in Birmingham which resulted in the deaths of four children, and the March on Washington.

We were briefed about how we should conduct ourselves and told to resist from rebelling against negative comments or actions. We were told to stay focused and to be non-violent. The very real possibility of violence and aggression toward us existed and were more probable to happen than not. The anticipation of violence and aggressions were much more stressful than the actual events.

In November of 1963, President John Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, TX. It was as if a member of our family had been murdered. Through it all, I never wavered in my determination to succeed.

After graduation, I enrolled at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where I planned to major in Mathematics. I was a work-study student and after the first year, I received my draft notice for military service. Two days before I was to report for the draft, I joined the Army. For me, this was the lesser of two evils. Vietnam was escalating and I believed I would end up there anyway, so I felt I should go there in a position of my choosing.

My oldest brother had graduated from Tennessee State University and was already stationed in Vietnam as a Captain over a Combat Medical Company of the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. I entered the United States Army Security Agency and after completion of Basic Training at Ft. Jackson, S.C., I was sent to Military Intelligence School at Ft. Devins Massachusetts. During my seven plus months of Intelligence School, I would visit Cambridge and spend time studying History at Boston College, Boston University, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, or John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. I would also take the subway to Roxbury to visit local businesses which were frequented by Malcolm X. An acquaintance of mine was assigned the room in which John F. Kennedy stayed as a student. As I entered that room, I felt that I had come full circle and that God had a purpose for me being there at that moment. I sat in the library archives of Boston University read form Dr. Martin Luther King's dissertation, *A Comparison of God in the Thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Wieman*. I felt connected to living history. I spent weekends on Cape Cod, walking from Plymouth Rock to Falmouth to Nantucket to Provincetown.

After completing Intelligence School, I received orders which to travel to Taiwan for my first assignment. I spent nearly two years in Taiwan and was detailed to Korea when a US Naval Intelligence Shi was captured by North Korea. My last overseas duty assignment was Vietnam where I served an extended tour in order to receive an early discharge from the Army which allowed me to return to school. After discharge from the Army, I went back to UT and completed a BA in Psychology and Black Studies and a MSSW in Clinical Social Work. My oldest brother was also enrolled at UT earning a law degree. He



later opened a private practice for several years and then joined the Tennessee State Department Attorney's Office. He recently retired this year after more than 35 years as Associate Attorney General.

I have had the opportunity to travel extensively through Asia, including Hong Kong, Japan, Okinawa, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. I have traveled to Mexico, Canada, the British and US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Africa. As a federal employee with the Department of Veteran Affairs, I traveled all over the U.S. including Alaska and Hawaii.

I retired on April 2, 2011 with 34 years of federal service. My parents' work ethic and teachings, along with my spiritual foundation and life experiences, continue to echo the truth that learning is a lifetime pursuit and that none of us will really ever arrive in this life. Those of us who acquire some knowledge and wisdom need to pass it on to others who may expand it, increase it, and perfect it so that it can be useful to generations to come. God made a perfect world but mankind has polluted and diluted it. God can restore it; He can heal the land!

Trent D. Gilmore

Parents: Mother: Louise Hill Gilmore  
Father: Tyree Gilmore (deceased)

Siblings: Tyris Gilmore (brother)  
Wyman Gilmore (brother – deceased)  
Pamela Gilmore (sister – deceased)  
Shari Gilmore McRae (sister)  
Darren Gilmore (brother)  
Melanie Gilmore (brother)  
Christopher Gilmore (brother)

Age: 49

Birthdate: October 3, 1963

Current state of residence: Tennessee

Athletic participation: None

High school attended: Alcoa High School

Degrees earned: Bachelor of Music (Maryville College)

Occupation: Public schools music teacher; church choir director

There are several people who contributed to my success as an African American male raised in the Blount County Area. These people are my parents (Louise and Tyree Gilmore), my private piano and voice teacher (Betty J. White), and my junior and high school chorus teacher (Emily Cline Plemmons).

My father, Tyree Gilmore, dropped out of school after the eighth grade to help his father work and to help support the Gilmore family. Although he never earned a high school diploma or college degree, he always worked – never relying on tax paying citizens to support him through welfare, food stamps, etc. My father married his first wife at the age of 18 and had his first child by the age 19. In order to support his family, they moved from Sandersville, GA to Alcoa, TN where he began a career at ALCOA (the Aluminum Company of America). After their fourth

child was born, my sister Shari McRae, his wife passed away. Also during this time, he was laid off from his job at ALCOA. Being laid off from work never inspired my father to ask for assistance. Instead he sought employment elsewhere and began working as a Custodian at a local hotel, an Orderly at a local nursing home, and he started his own business: Gilmore Construction. He willingly sacrificed his young adult years and worked three jobs to support his family. Two years later, he married his second wife, my mother: Louise Hill Gilmore. To this union, they added four more children. Even though he began working again at ALCOA in the mid-1960s, he did not give up his construction company. He worked both jobs to better support his family until he retired from Alcoa in 1992. After retiring, he continued his business, Gilmore Construction, in order to ensure the employment of those who worked for him until his death from pancreatic cancer in 1994. My father taught me, through his actions, that the key to success is working hard, sacrificing and being self-sufficient. Giving up and relying on the government (and others) for help is not an option. Because of his guidance and leadership, I developed my own work ethic – that of not giving up because of the difficulties of my job and not giving up because of personal problems. I have been afflicted with arthritis since my teen age years but have never let my health problems hinder me from being successful. This work ethic is inspired by my father.

My mother, Louise Hill Gilmore, was born in Alcoa, Tennessee and is the youngest of twelve children. She is the only one of those twelve children to graduate from high school (Charles M. Hall School) and the only one to attend college (Maryville College), majoring in elementary education. Even though she only attended college for two years, she always worked until marrying at the age of twenty seven. At that time, her job became that of raising four step children and then giving birth to four more of her own and raising them as well. She is a strong African American woman who sacrificed her dreams of being a teacher to raise eight children

and to take care of her household. She sacrificed having friends and a social life so that her children would receive proper care in order to all be successful members of society. My mother helped all of us with our school work from grades k – 12. She taught us that being unsuccessful is not an option, even if it means working hard and sacrificing a social life.

Betty J. White is a graduate of Alcoa High School and a graduate of Knoxville College with a double major in Voice and Piano (with teacher licensure). Before retiring, she was a junior high school music teacher, church choir director and private piano and voice instructor. When I began taking piano and voice lessons from her in 1979, I was amazed at her talent, her dedication to music, and her work ethic. She was a dynamic junior high school choir director whose choruses won awards and festivals on a yearly basis. Her church choir was the best African American church choir in East Tennessee. With those two full-time jobs, she was still willing to sacrifice any free time by providing private voice and piano lessons for the children of Alcoa, Tennessee every week day after school and on weekends. She taught me that playing and singing the popular music of the time was not the most efficient way to become the best musician that I could possibly be. Instead, she insisted that I (and her other private students) concentrate on classical music and music theory. She was quite the task master and never accepted no for an answer and never accepted excuses. Because of her musical tutelage and influence, I am the musician and teacher that I am today. I am also following in her footsteps by being a middle school music teacher, church choir director and private piano and voice instructor

Lastly, Emily Cline Plemmons is a graduate of the University of Tennessee with Bachelors and Masters Degrees in music education. She taught at Alcoa Middle School and Alcoa High School until retiring. Mrs. Plemmons recognized my thirst for musical knowledge when I was in her middle school choir at Alcoa. She encouraged me to stay in choir until I

graduated in 1981. While in middle school and high school, she instilled the love of choral music in me. She recognized my talent and would let me lead the class whenever she was absent. Also, while under her leadership, I auditioned and was selected for regional and all state choirs. Mrs. Plemmons taught me that music was not a hobby but could and would be a lifestyle for me. Because of her influence and encouragement, I attended Maryville College and fulfilled my dream of becoming a music teacher. Today, I am honored to work in the same position at Alcoa Middle and High Schools that was held by Emily Cline Plemmons.

The people who mainly contributed to my success as an African American male raised in Blount County are my parents and my two music teachers. Their influence and guidance not only contributed to my success but resulted in me being the man that I am today – one who works, contributes to society and never lets obstacles, such as health issues, impede being successful.

## Roy Scott

I was born in Alcoa, Tennessee on September 15, 1945. My parents, James and Mayola Scott are now deceased. I have two sisters, Mary Scott and Harriet Allen, and one brother, James Scott who is now deceased.

I still reside in Alcoa. I can tell you that growing up in Alcoa many years ago was very different from today. We were such a 'close-knot' community that it truly was a 'village'! My life was shaped and molded by my family my neighbors, my teachers, and the elders of the 'village'. If anyone saw you going astray, they did not wait to tell your parents; they corrected you right then and there and then told your parents which meant double trouble. There was no threat of child abuse if you were spanked or disciplined by parents or neighbors!

I graduated from Charles M. Hall School in 1964. We walked to school and so did many of our teachers. Our teachers truly cared about each of us. They strived to make sure that everyone succeeded not only in the classroom but in life. Mrs. Ruth Rainer was my 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher and also my son's first grade teacher! Her longevity as a teacher spoke volumes and showed her love for the children and her passion as a teacher. Mrs. Dorothy Dean, Mrs. Geraldine Upton, and Mr. Samuel Scudder just to name a few, were just as passionate about education. They would come to your house if there were concerns about the student.

My mother died when I was 15 years old and needless to say, there were many difficult days that followed her passing. My Sister Mary became the stabilizing force in my life and she protected me and kept me on the right path. I joined the Army in 1965 and served three years. I was in the Army National Guard for 299 years where I received many awards and accreditations.

I married Connie Hooper in July 1968 and have been soul mates for 42 years! Our son Rodney was born in September 1969. We now have a daughter-in-law, Marcee and a granddaughter, Miah, who have brought tremendous Joy to our lives.

I was reluctant to apply for work at the Aluminum Company in fear of being laid off but at the urging of several elders in the community, I applied for a job and was called to work. I retired in 2009 after 41 years of service. It was truly a blessing to work at the plant! It provided a comfortable living for me and my family. I am so grateful that the elders, who had worked at ALCOA for many years, encouraged me to apply.

I was a member of Bethel Baptist Missionary Church until I got married and now have attended St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church for more than 42 years. I have been tremendously blessed by the relationships that have developed over these years. My faith in God and his grace and mercy have sustained me throughout my life! If it had not been for the Lord, my family and my community on my side, my life would be much different today.

## Carl Douglas Stewart

My name is Carl Douglas Stewart. My mother and father are Marjorie and Dexter Stewart and I have a long list of other very important family members. I was born on May 30, 1985 and I currently reside in Houston, Texas. I attended Maryville High school and participated in several sports including; basketball, track, and football the latter afforded me a scholarship to Auburn University. During my time at Auburn I earned bachelors' degrees in political science and business administration. I currently work as an offshore materials specialist for Noble Drilling based in Sugar Land, Texas.

As an African-American male born and raised in East Tennessee I faced many obstacles in my pursuit of success. The most important contributing factor that enabled me to overcome these obstacles is my family, both nuclear and extended. Unlike some of my peers I was blessed with a loving family environment that shielded me from many pitfalls that lay claim to the youth in my community. With many distractions aside, my family instilled values such as respect and honor in me as a young child and chased away notions that my only option was a life roaming the streets. My family was also instrumental in showing me the value of hard work. Through their own merits I was conditioned to strive for excellence in all aspects of my life.



Granville Dexter Stewart

Parents – Fred Lee Stewart/Maxine Tabb Stewart

Grandparents – Grace McHan/Eddie Stewart

Mary Tabb Ford/A.G. Tabb

Brothers – Michael Stewart and Joe Pearl

Age – 59, born July 31, 1953

Currently resides in Alcoa, Tennessee/Blount County

Athletic Participation – High School Track/ College Basketball

Attended Alcoa High School and Warren Wilson College

Manager, Credit Operations at Elavon, a subsidiary of US Bank

I was born and raised in Alcoa, Tennessee to parents who focused on family and stressed education. It was important to them that my brothers and I put our best effort into being good students and good citizens. My father was an Alcoa City Commissioner when I was young and talked to us about community involvement and personal responsibility. My mother worked outside of the home, so they both stressed the importance of us being responsible for our actions and making wise choices.

I attended Charles M Hall School through the sixth grade. During that time schools were segregated. Our teachers were also our neighbors, so I was truly raised in a village. Teachers treated us no differently than they did their own children. They believed in our ability to be successful and taught to guide us toward it. Sports did not have the kind of impact that it has today, but we were given opportunities to be involved in sports outside of school by the men of our community who worked together to coach baseball and football teams. My experience with integration was not until I attended Alcoa High School in seventh grade. This was the third year of integration at the high school and tensions had eased somewhat. The name-calling and taunts were not as widespread by the time I arrived, but there were some incidences. Racial tensions

may not have always been center stage, but were always underlying problems when I was in school. Most teachers, adjusting to dealing with black students, either ignored or tried to react in sympathetic ways. They would attempt to provide the same consequences, but I had problems with being disciplined by white teachers, so I refused to be paddled. The principal would have to call my father, but I never took the paddle. The atmosphere was very different than Charles M Hall. I wasn't always sure that all teachers believed in me, but for the most part I do believe that some teachers wanted me to be successful.

Because my parents worked long hours to provide for our family, my grandmother filled in to provide some of our care. She was a very strong disciplinarian, but we knew that she disciplined us in love because she wanted us to be the best that we could be. I remember the times that Granny spent talking to me, my brothers and cousins about the difficult times that she had growing up. She grew up in Browns, Alabama and moved to West Virginia during times of extreme racial suppression. I learned a greater respect for my elders and for the past history of African Americans from the time spent listening to Granny. Because Black History was not taught in detail in schools, that was the best way to learn about the past other than reading for myself.

I am who I am today because I was truly raised in a village. I grew up knowing that all adults in school, church, home and the community were watching out for me. They expected all children to be respectful and called us out if we weren't. I was surrounded by people who loved, nurtured and believed that in spite of the color of my skin or my circumstances, I could be whatever I wanted to be with hard work and faith in God.

## Stanley I. Young Sr.

I was born the fourth of six siblings to the union of Theresa Porter and Frank Anthony Young Sr. in Maryville Tennessee, November 17<sup>th</sup> 1953. Mrs. Young set very strong standards for all her children which accounts for the high standards I currently hold. Ish Alonzo Porter, the only licensed African American mortician with an established business in the history of Blount County, was a major influence in my life. My discipline and ability to maintain a business, family and continue his farming/gardening attributes made lasting impressions on my life. Today I feel that if he could do it I can to, which supports my belief to hold down full and part time employment throughout 10 years of Pin the family from day one that I can remember. I grew up in the St. Paul A.M.E. Zion church in Maryville Tennessee.

I attended W.J. Hale School. Mrs. Martha Howard an excellent teacher provided direction in grades 1-3. Mrs. Ollie Henry was the disciplinarian in grades 4-5 at W.J. Hale. Michael, Jeanette, and I were the first African Americans to integrate Sam Houston Middle School entering the sixth grade in 1963. After Sam Houston, I attended Maryville Junior High School and became the first African American to play football at Maryville Jr. High. From Maryville Jr. High, I attended Maryville High School with an academic emphasis on Biology and Health education. After graduation from Maryville High in 1972, Knoxville College was the next step of progression, following his mothers' footsteps. After five years at KC, one of those being a one year internship at Oconaluftee Job Corp Center as a classroom instructor proved very rewarding. During the internship the opportunity arose to provide a great deal of guidance and counseling for young men of all ethnic backgrounds, seeing some individuals move on to be successful welders and Job Corp Center Directors.

Currently, I live in Oak Ridge Tennessee, employed by the State of Tennessee for twenty five years with the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. In this current position as Person Centered Planner, my skills and abilities to evaluate services being provided to individuals receiving services through the Medicaid waiver program are displayed. Having worked in the area of mental health/mental retardation, to include individual and group counseling has given me the opportunity to show compassion and provide needed resources to many in need.

My success is attributed to my faith in Christ, instilled by my parents and grandparents at an early age. The fact that my parents and grandparents had to be creative and innovative to be successful in Blount County raised my awareness of the need for motivation, dedication and persistence. My ability to adapt to the social atmosphere in Blount County, and continue my higher education at Knoxville College provided me with academic and world wisdom to pursue a successful career in the field of social work. In many instances others feel negative circumstances are a reason to quit, others take this as a motivator for success, which has attributed to my today.

VITA

KERI C. PRIGMORE

Personal Data:                   Date of Birth: March 7, 1975  
                                          Place of Birth: Knoxville, Tennessee

Education:                        Ed. D., Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis  
                                          East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 2013

                                          Master of Science in Elementary Education  
                                          University of Tennessee - Knoxville, TN 2001

                                          Bachelor of Science Degree in Communications  
                                          University of Tennessee - Knoxville, TN 2000

Professional Experience        Assessment and Accountability Coordinator, Alcoa Middle School  
                                                                                          Alcoa, TN, 2008 - present

                                          Certified Value-Added Leader, Battelle for Kids  
                                                                                          Nashville, TN, 2010

                                          Leadership Blount Graduate  
                                                                                          Maryville, TN 2010

                                          Teacher, Alcoa Middle School  
                                                                                          Alcoa, TN, 2004 - 2008

                                          Teacher, Heritage Middle School  
                                                                                          Maryville, TN, 2001 - 2004

Presentations:                    TIGER Teacher Evaluation, Alcoa Middle School 2011

                                          Value- Added, Alcoa Middle Schools 2010

                                          East Tennessee Title 1 Conference, 2010