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From the Desk of Executive Director and Founder

It is a great pleasure to share the JV Journal of Educational Research and Interdisciplinary Studies [JERIS] with you. The aim is to provide quality educational research and refined educational practices that will afford you as the reader to be empowered as a leader/practitioner as well as serve as an active transformational change agent within your higher educational institution.

Thus, the [JERIS] is published twice a year allowing current educational researchers to conduct thorough research in a number of academic areas. In doing so, JERIS is committed to publishing information that will assist higher educational institutions with the needed tools to improve the overall quality of instruction, leadership, teaching and learning, retention (administration, faculty and students), student engagement—while providing additional scholarly resources that will aid in supporting diversity and multicultural education.

Lastly—I asking you to support [JERIS] by sharing it with your esteem colleagues and encourage them to read it and to submit a scholarly research article for publication.

Educationally yours,

---Jà Hon Vance

A Commentary on Learning Resources Centers



By: Alvin Daughtrey
LRC Director at Strayer University—White Marsh Campus

The Learning Resources Center (LRC) is vitally linked to the academic success and retention of students. Throughout the campuses of Strayer University, you will find all of our libraries small, personable, inviting and operated by an LRC manager and at least one assistant. Here, we continually welcome new and potential students and usually in the presence of remnants of our continuing student population. Socializing the two groups is entirely acceptable. While the occasion to greet faculty is on a less frequent basis, it does not minimize the importance of these academic libraries. Rather, underscores its significance.

Every campus is different in terms of culture and productivity. As a university, we continue managing to do well. Singularly, each campus has its challenges. My colleagues and I share observations made from our respective campus locations and agree that the LRC is underutilized. Many times throughout any given quarter, only a handful of patrons are present. At other times, there may not be an available seat in the house. The latter period is usually consistent with deadline dates for assignments, writing projects or preparation for midterms and final exams. We see our library as an extension of the classroom where students are exposed to its benefits and find value produced by means of competent, compassionate, and courteous staff.

Students receive ongoing assistance as an opportunity to obtain the help needed to move forward with their studies. They learn early during the quarter what they need to know in order to be successful, and our academic libraries have the resources required for their success. Navigating the Blackboard learning platform, accessing tutorials and conducting a research are learned behaviors. It is no one particular thing that we do to assist our students. There is a multiplicity of

teaching techniques employed to coach, encourage, and train, but self-imposed barriers to teaching and learning can be difficult to remove from anyone entrenched in a self-defeating philosophy. We encounter all types of learners. This is certainly a work in process.

Students who frequent the library are well-informed compared to those who bypass our services. They gain confidence and achieve better academic outcomes than most non-patrons. The problem is that we are not reaching an adequate amount of that population. Incoming professors may be brand new or on loan from other campuses and are hardly ever introduced to the LRC staff. We must change this practice to garner their support. Only a small fraction of our assigned faculty remains consistent in their support of the LRC over the years. Students might struggle less with their coursework and eventually do better with their assignments if faculty were to make use of the Learning Resources Center. At the end of the day when campus libraries are properly supported, the job of faculty would not only be made easier; students also would become better prepared academically, but it does not end there.

We also offer a variety of career services, workshops, and campus events. Whether students or graduates are seeking a promotion, retraining, or changing careers, I inform them that their pursuit requires preparation and that preparation is a process. We start with writing the resume and when that is complete, we move to writing the cover letter. Both resume and cover letter are job specific – tailored to the job a candidate is seeking. From there, we prepare for the interview. Most of those who have worked with me through the process received offers of employment. I also encourage entrepreneurship and provide the necessary resources.

Interestingly, three of the areas employer stakeholders ask higher education to emphasize are related to the skills libraries have always taught: critical thinking and analytical thinking skills (81% of employers); ability to analyze and solve complex problems (75%); and ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources (68%). (Oakleaf, 2010, p. 27)

Clearly, Learning Resources Centers across the country have the tools for student success.

Reference

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African-American Male Athletes: School Counselor and Parent Collaborations for Academic Success

Authors: Dr. Paul C. Harris, University of Virginia
Dr. Erik M. Hines, University of Connecticut—Lead Researcher

ABSTRACT

Athletic pursuits have historically held significance in the lives of African American males. In fact, sports are often the avenue through which many African American males hope to attain respect, power, and control that often evade them in other areas of their lives (Harris 2014). Unemployment, substance misuse, violence, and mass incarceration have reduced the number of adult male role models for Black male students, thus making it difficult for Black males to envision a way out of their social condition (Richardson, 2012). As a result, African American families, among other factors, often significantly contribute to the channeling of African American males into athletic pursuits (Edwards, 2000; Sailes, 1998). While such participation may occupy time that could otherwise be devoted to less constructive activities, overemphasis on athletic accomplishment may take time away from focusing on academic achievement. For African American students, familial/parental involvement is important to their academic success (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkins, & Closson, 2005; Jeynes, 2005). School counselors and parents are critical to ensuring that athletic participation is more in line with the type of involvement that is linked to positive academic outcomes (Epstein, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2005). Ultimately, school counselors have the potential to coordinate efforts with a number of stakeholders, particularly parents, to facilitate a positive integration of sports into the educational experience of Black males. In this article, the authors discuss school counselors and parents collaborating with their African American male athletes to ensure that athletics is a complement to their educational and career success.

INTRODUCTION

African American male athletes view athletics as a source of freedom from the many social ills (e.g., poverty, violence, drug abuse) that plague their communities, and as an opportunity for career advancement, financial success, and a strategy for providing resources for family members from disadvantaged backgrounds (Harris, 2014; Rhoden, 2006; Eitzen, 1999). African American males are more likely to be incarcerated, underemployed, and have a shorter life span (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006; Stahl, 2008). Athletics could be a great alternative to the many negative choices African American males face (Harris, Hines, Williams, & Kelly, 2014), but it can also undermine the priority of achieving academic success. Sports are often the only reason for which urban Black males will attend school (Singer & May, 2010). Zaglebaum (2014) argues that athletics presents a double bind for Black males, because on one hand many believe it is the only way they can get to college, and if and when they do get there, they are considered a commodity. Warde (2008) asserted that the college enrollment trends of Black males, in general, are worrisome.

Education is the primary vehicle for access to a venue of career choices, to increase one's earning capacity, and an opportunity for upward mobility (Staff & Mortimer, 2007). However, for African Americans, they lag behind their White and Asian counterparts in academic achievement (Hines, Harris, & Ham, 2014; NAEP, 2009; NCES, 2007; Uwah, McMahon, & Furlow, 2008). The achievement gap of African Americans is further complicated by higher dropout rates and lower graduation rates coupled by

the overrepresentation of African American males in special education and the underrepresentation in Advanced Placement and Honor's courses in addition to the International Baccalaureate program (Ford & Moore, 2004; Greene & Winters, 2006; Martin, Martin, Semivan-Gibson, Wilkins, 2007; Patton, 1998; Smith, 2004). Within education, the psychological, social, physical, and personal burdens that African-American males carry must be considered if the educational disparity is to improve. African-American males bring with them to the classroom many historical and social ills. Specifically, they bring with them "a history of oppression that has effected [their] family unit, a life of poverty or some form of economic struggle, a community of criminality and violence or some form of racial frustration, a generation of enraged and inadequately educated parents and elders, and the beginnings of deep psychological and esteem issues that take root with this first engagement in society (preschool, cartoons, etc.)" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 144). Professional school counselors are in a unique position, as trained systemic change agents, to coordinate intervention efforts in this regard.

School counselors are encouraged to create partnerships with parents in addition to school personnel and community stakeholders to develop strategies, action plans, and innovative opportunities to direct African American male athletes to understand that education is a successful gateway to a sustaining college/career ready future (Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Epstein, 1995). Researchers (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Jeynes, 2007; Ziomek-Daigle, 2010) have linked parent/family involvement as a positive predictor of academic achievement, reducing the high school dropout rate, and reducing suspension rates among students. In fact, parental involvement is seen as a more effective indicator of academic achievement more so than socioeconomic status (Davis & Lambie, 2005; Hawes & Plourde, 2005; Henderson & Berla, 1994). Specifically, Hines & Holcomb-McCoy (2013) specific parental characteristics such as a two parent family structures were positive predictors for academic success. Not only is parental involvement important to raising academic performance, communities and schools are seen as vital stakeholders to improving academic success among students of color (Bryan, 2005).

Currently in the literature, parental involvement is often infused with school, family, and community partnerships (Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Epstein, 1995; Griffin & Steen, 2010; Mitchell & Bryan, 2007; Sanders, 2009; Sheldon, 2007). In this article, we associate parental/family involvement with school, family, and community partnerships. For this reason, we focus on the collaboration aspect of school counselors working with parents to address the academic needs of African American male student athletes.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE STUDENT ATHLETES

The African-American male has had a long, storied presence in America's world of sports. From Tom Molineax, in the early 19th century, to Jesse Owens, in the early 20th century, to contemporary phenoms such as LeBron James and Tiger Woods, African-American males have been making headlines for centuries. While the desegregation of sports did not originate out of sincere concern about the negative consequences of segregation, but rather due to player shortage because of White players' participation in World War II, it is now hard for some to even imagine collegiate and professional sports without the presence of African Americans. According to Eitzen (1999), African Americans make up 80 percent of the players in professional basketball, nearly 70 percent of professional football players, and 18 percent of professional baseball players. To that end, two-thirds of African American males between the ages of 13 and 18 believe that they can earn a living playing professional sports (Eitzen, 1999). Per Lapchick (as cited in Sailes, 1998), the African-American family is seven times more likely than a White family to push a male child into sports. Some may see it as a way out of their poor social condition, while others may see it as an opportunity to gain the respect and power that seems to evade the African-American male in American society. Simply, sports have become a focus for African-American males because it allows them to define themselves and their masculinities (May, 2004). Majors (1998) would argue that African-

American males are only deceived by such endeavors and ultimately lock themselves into their low status in society.

Sports, however, are often the avenue through which African-American males hope to attain the respect, power, and control that often evade them through career attainment and social status. Such participation is also often welcomed by groups in society who are not as welcoming to the participation of African-American males in other domains such as politics. Realizing this, African-American families, among other factors, contribute to the increased channeling of African-American males into sports (Sailes, 1998). While such participation may occupy time that could otherwise be devoted to less constructive means to gaining mobility, it may also occupy time that could be devoted to educational pursuits, thus potentially rendering the participants educationally inferior to their studious peers. Eide & Ronan (2001) and Braddock, (1981) suggest African-American males' participation in sports can enhance their educational attainment process (e.g. by providing additional networks useful for social mobility, opportunities to develop work-ethic, chances to learn life lessons through sports, etc.). Spreitzer, (1994) believed sports participation for African-American males is educationally exploitive in nature, in that it detracts time from educational endeavors, particularly due to the high level of commitment to sports this group has given its belief that it is the primary way to success (economic and otherwise).

Sports are clearly a huge part of our society, and have been for decades (citation). Regarding youth, sports participation is still the single most popular school-sponsored extracurricular activity, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender (Miller, Melnick, Barnes, Farrell, & Sabo, 2005). Involvement in sports is generally accompanied by attachment to influential others (such as coaches and teammates) (Sabo, Miller, Melnick, Farrell, & Barnes, 2005). Further, through sports involvement, adolescents make friends, become more popular, and acquire college-related values and expectations. James (2005) argues that sports can increase the number of opportunities that youth have to connect with others, leading to very positive, meaningful experiences and outcomes, and increasing their self-awareness in relation to the rest of the world in which they live. Coleman, (1961) posits that participation in sports detracts from any gains in academic areas while others (e.g. Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Videon, 2002) contend that there are numerous benefits to participating in sports. For example, Sabo et al. (2005) argue that sports participation may provide adolescents with the social opportunities and utilitarian skills to pursue and achieve culturally defined goals or, more subjectively, the expectation that sports involvement will help them achieve desired goals in school and in later adult life. Sports participation has particular relevance for African-American males, as it has long been deemed a "dramatic means of improving one's station in life, of gaining economic advantage and prestige that would have been impossible to achieve without" (Rhoden, 2006, p. 42-43). Given the pervasiveness of sports in youth culture, and the particular draw for African-American males in light of its historical significance, it is imperative that more attention is given to African-American males' high school sports participation, and the educational implications it may have. Regardless of the debate over whether or not sports lead to positive or negative outcomes for African-American males, their disproportionate draw to athletics has implications for all school counselors.

As systemic change agents within schools, school counselors can coordinate efforts amongst all stakeholders to improve the students' educational experience (ASCA, 2012). The school counselor has the challenging opportunity of facilitating the educational/vocational development of African-American males, who are often subject to very negative life circumstances that serve as barriers to such development. School counselors can help African American male students balance the emphasis of academic success and athletic pursuits.

ACADEMIC ACHEIVEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

Although research has shown that African American males excel in the athletics arena, they often lag behind their counterparts in academics. The achievement gap between African American males and their White peers has been a consistent problem in America's educational system (Baker, 2005; Noguera, 2003; Schott, 2012). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 43% of Whites and 36% of Asian/Pacific Islanders scored at or above "proficient" levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment compared to 16% of African American and 20% of Latino students (NCES, 2007). In particular, Whites outperformed African Americans and Latinos in the 17-year-old age category by 29 points in 2004 (NCES, 2007). Whites scored higher on mathematics assessments in the same age category by 28 points compared to African American students and 24 points with Latinos (NCES, 2007).

In addition to the achievement gap, an attainment gap exists between African American males and White students. Forty-seven percent of African American males earned a high school diploma compared to 53% of White males (Schott Foundation, 2010). To complicate the attainment gap dilemma, higher high school dropout rates and explosion and suspension rates (Martin, Martin, Semivan-Gibson, & Wilkins, 2007; NCES, 2003; Noguera, 2003). This problem often contributes to barriers that prevent African American males from having a diverse selection of postsecondary opportunities. Moreover, adults with high school diplomas tend to have more job and career opportunities than individuals who have not obtained their diplomas (Entwistle, Alexander, & Olson, 2004). Education is viewed as a path to social mobility and better opportunities for higher salaries (Baker, 2005; Jackson & Moore, 2006).

Furthermore, African American students, particularly males, are less likely to be enrolled and underrepresented in Advanced Placement courses or college preparatory programs such as the International Baccalaureate Program which demonstrates an opportunity gap for this population (Whiting & Ford, 2009). This obstacle may lead to lack of academic preparation in undertaking the task of completing rigorous coursework at the post-secondary level. Consequently, African American males are more likely to receive special education or labeled as "serious emotionally disturbance" than Whites (Harry & Anderson, 1994; Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2008). Patton (1998) noted that African American males were more likely to be placed in separate or restrictive classrooms, segregating them from the general school population. Correspondingly, college attendance rates for African American males have declined while the rate of degrees awarded to African American females doubled at post-secondary institutions (Roach, 2001; NCES, 2007; Warde, 2007). Even more, if African American male athletes attend college and play sports, they tend to have lower grade point averages, academic probation, and exhibit behavioral problems off the field (Beamon & Bell, 2006). Furthermore, Beamon and Bell (2006) reported that many African American males who play Division I sports often see it as a career opportunity and are less likely to concentrate on academic success and attaining a baccalaureate degree. For African American male athletes who were basketball players at a Division I college or university, their graduation rate was 38% while White male basketball players graduated at a rate of 52% (Lapchick, 2000; Siegel, 1996). Black male student-athletes with exceptional athletic talent who do matriculate to being collegiate student-athletes don't fare as well educationally as other student-athletes or their Black male student counterparts (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013).

SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND PARENT COLLABORATION

Research has shown that partnerships between various stakeholders can positively impact academic success (Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, & Van Voorhis, 2002; Sanders, 1998). For example, Epstein's theory of school-family-community partnerships emphasizes the involvement of families, school, and communities in a student's educational development. Epstein (1995) describes parental involvement in a framework, which includes six types. Type one is parenting,

in which families provide supportive home environments where children can be students. Type two is communicating, where schools design effective communication tools in which a reciprocal dialogue (i.e., email, home visits, written communication, etc.) can be established. In type three, volunteering, parents are recruited for assistance and support of the school. Type four involves learning at home and schools assisting families with information and ideas about how to help students with homework or school related activities. Type five involves parents being included in the decision making of school policies and other related matters. Finally type six, collaborating with the community, involves families and students receiving information about resources within their community (i.e., health, cultural, recreational, etc.) from the schools. Researchers have concluded that parental involvement leads to academic success and behavioral attributes associated with positive academic outcomes (Bryan, 2005; Epstein, 1995; Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Clark-Salinas, Rodriguez-Jansorn, & Van Voorhis, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al.; Jeynes, 2005). To note, school counselors usually see a higher level of school-family-community partnerships involving parents at the elementary level (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004).

Bryan (2005) suggested that school, family and community partnerships create relationships that reduce academic barriers, improve communication, and provide resources to improve academic performance among students of color. Also, Bryan (2005) recommended that school counselors utilize partnerships around extra-curricular enrichment. School counselors should use tutoring or academic enhancement programs to increase academic success and post-secondary opportunities for African American male student athletes. Griffin and Steen (2010) reported in their study that school counselors believed that school-family-community partnerships were important. Further, they suggested that school counselors create an environment within the school where parents have access to a myriad of resources such as educational tools, need-based resources, and information regarding their student's academics. School counselors are in a critical position where they can solicit the involvement of school personnel, parents, and community stakeholders to address issues that stifle student development and learning, particularly for students of color and families of low socioeconomic status (Bryan & Henry, 2008).

The literature is limited when discussing issues around school counselor – parent collaboration and the academic success of African American male student athletes. Goldberg (1991) provided numerous strategies to assist school counselors working with parents to balance academics and athletics with student athletes. These strategies included utilizing the athletic triangle (i.e., student athlete, coach and parent) to unite all three parties on a solution to bring awareness to the importance of academic achievement, school counselors utilizing the coach as a major stakeholder given his/her status (e.g., mentor and leader) in the lives of student athletes, using communication as a tool to convey expectations of each party in the athletic triangle, and creating workshops to help student athletes understand the importance of academics and the transition from high school to college.

IMPLICATION FOR PRACTICE

The school counselor has the very challenging opportunity of managing the educational/vocational path of African-American males, who are often subject to very negative circumstances that serve as barriers to such development. African-American males continue to experience educational inequalities and inconsistencies in school systems across the country (Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2008). "It is clear that the educational plight of African-American males mirrors a troubling pattern found in other social domains of American society (e.g. criminal justice system and workplace)" (Jackson & Moore, 2008, p. 847). Increasingly difficult to find employment, deprived of a decent education, and lacking the appropriate skills necessary to gain social, economic, and political mobility, it is arguable that African-American males often have no other recourse than to resort to illegal means of making a living (Boyd, 2007). Additionally, for a group that can often feel powerless and locked out of social, political, and economic opportunities, sports provides a place to release suppressed anger and aggression, and feel powerful (Majors, 1998).

School counselors must be diligent in coordinating efforts to ensure that athletes connect their athletic endeavors to strong educational plans and communicate their plans with parents. There must be consistent advocacy efforts to create opportunities for success for them in addition to whatever success they are achieving in the sports arena. African-American male athletes must feel empowered to succeed educationally as well as athletically. "Empowerment can be defined as a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals, families, and communities can take action to improve their situations" (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007, p. 40). Such facilitated success opportunities could involve mentoring programs with rites of passage ceremonies, summer enrichment programs, honors and Advanced Placement class exposure, and volunteering opportunities. Further, advocacy efforts in, for example, parent/teacher conferences, and conversations with coaches can provide the needed voice for students when they are at a crossroads of choosing academic or athletic pursuits and possibly neglecting the other. "Advocacy is defined as action taken by counselors to facilitate the removal of external and institutional barriers for students' well-being" (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007, p.40). According to Lee and Hipolito-Delgado (2007), it involves the process of arguing for a cause, either for one's self or for another. Bryan & Henry (2008) discussed the use of a strengths-based approach for school counselors to empower students through school, family, and community partnerships. They suggest that school counselors create an environment focused on strengths and assets of schools, families, and communities to increase academic success. These assets and strengths include school counselors utilizing parents and community stakeholders to bring resources (i.e., human, tangible, or financial) that will enhance the academic achievement of students of colors.

Hines (2009) & Hines & Holcomb-McCoy, (2013) recommend that school counselors reach out to African American fathers as a method of highlighting the importance of academic success for African American male athletes. School counselors can utilize fathers or male role models as mentors, and academic coaches to talk with athletes about career fields that can be lucrative such as those in business, math, and science. Moreover, school counselor should encourage fathers to spend time on homework and have discussions about daily events at school (Hines, 2009). School counselors can consult with both parent and athlete on developing an academic plan that ensures college readiness. All parties can use this plan as a contract to ensure that athletes are focused on performing well in the classroom as well as on the field.

School counselors should engage in working with the coach, parent, and athlete to ensure that African American male athletes are held accountable for making good grades, completing coursework, as well as participating in academic enrichment opportunities. Further, school counselors and parents should collaborate to ensure that African American male student athletes take rigorous courses and make sure teachers are teaching to them high standards as suggested by the Education Trust (Education Trust, 2010). It is also important that school counselor challenge parents and student athletes to go beyond making the minimum academic requirements for NCAA eligibility and strive for requirements that are comparative to Ivy League universities and other institutions with strict admissions standards.

School counselors are in a favorable position where they can focus on the academic, career, and personal/social domain of students (ASCA, 2012). Furthermore, school counselors have more flexibility in working with school personnel, parents, and community stakeholders in developing strategies to assist African American male student athletes in choosing post-secondary career options, improving academic performance, and optimizing their academic abilities within the arena of sports. It is imperative that school counselors work within a school, family, community partnership model to ensure African American male athletes reach their intellectual capacity and not just their athletic potential.

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STYLES' TOP TEN REASONS WHY STUDENTS SHOULD ATTEND A COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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Ms. Kathleen A. Styles, M.Ed. is a retired higher education administrator with close to forty years of higher education experience. She earned a B.S. and M.S. degree from Coppin State University, formerly Coppin State College. She also completed advanced study at the University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland at Eastern Shore in Education Leadership (ABD).

Community colleges are very unique institutions of higher education. They have a reputation for being the most expedient vessels for pursuing current, future, and state of the art education, career and vocational training all under one roof that is responsive to workforce needs, demands and personal enrichment. Community colleges offer degree and certificate programs, training, certification, recertification, and personal enrichment for people of all ages, socio-economic, and ethnic backgrounds including children to adults and pre-GED to individuals with Ph.D.'s. Community colleges can serve as a launch pad to an illustrious future for potential doctors, lawyers, politicians, chief executive officers, vice presidents, teachers, engineers, administrators, athletes, etc. They provide guidance, direction, scholarship, leadership and help students realize their potential. Community colleges provide opportunity for a successful future. They represent the [c] in community. They are accessible, affordable and offer education and training in flexible learning formats. Helping you see, dream and believe, you will achieve success. That's what community colleges do!

Specifically, why attend a community college, see below "Styles' Top Ten Reasons for Attending Community College."

- 1.) Community colleges are a "One Stop Shop" for every educational level....remedial, college level, and advanced placement/accelerated classes. (A community college's role is to meet the educational needs of its community. Students may come from public, private and parochial institutions. They can also be home schooled. They could be in need of adult basic education or a late start adult to the concept of higher education. They may be in-state, out-of-state and international students. Students' educational achievement levels may range from remedial to college level. The community college's commitment to its community is to respond by

providing educational experiences, resources and opportunities to advance the skills and abilities of its students. Community colleges hire qualified staff who are creative, innovative, deeply committed, and passionate about the academic and social educational experiences afforded to their valued students. They are also self-motivated to remain abreast of current trends and best practices in their respective fields.)

- 2.) Students receive placement testing used as a guidance tool to assist in accurate pre-requisite placement in required educational foundation courses. *(To ensure academic success for students, they receive placement testing at no extra charge during the admissions procedures to determine adequate placement in appropriate educational foundation courses such as English, Math and Science.)*
- 3.) Students are embraced with caring and concerned educational advisors/coaches who provide custom tailored services engineered for student success. *(Community college's hire qualified, credentialed staff who are skilled, genuine, and passionate about their mission to support, coach, and mentor students to successfully complete their educational goals. Faculty members provide educational rigors that include quality educational experiences and opportunities for growth while at the same time showing support and compassion toward students.)*
- 4.) Classes for your convenience—time/location/accessibility. *(Classes are taught on-campus, off-campus, on-line, day, afternoon, evening and in hybrid formats to accommodate the challenging schedules of its students. Qualified faculty are hired who understand and practice teaching pedagogy while providing extreme support to students in the teaching and learning process.)*
- 5.) Big Savings! (It's affordable and you receive a quality education). *(Community colleges offer students a quality education at affordable costs. Typically, students receive stellar instruction from award winning faculty at the community college. Many students also qualify for grants and scholarships that help defray the cost of their associate's degree. Often students make the wise choice of first attending community college—thereby incurring a big savings that affords them the opportunity to transfer to the college or university of their dreams—more like money in the bank for the higher tuition costs. A win-win situation because students receive a quality education, earn an associate's degree, and save money to help defray higher costs for attending a university upon transfer.)*
- 6.) Services are designed to provide students with enriched educational and socially engaging experiences. *(Many community colleges have an “open door” policy granting admission to all students who apply. Enrollment services prepare students for enrollment at the college. Students' needs are widely anticipated in the classroom and outside the classroom, formal and informal. Students with special needs receive instructional support based upon needs made known to the institution. Students participate in clubs and organizations, attend workshops, go on field trips and participate in other activities.)*
- 7.) Students have the option of taking short term courses for self- enrichment and personal development or certificate and or degree programs in career program areas. *(The community college is recognized for staying abreast of the employment/workforce needs of its region by providing state-of the art training, degree and certificate programs and short-term training responsive to the economic and employment needs/demands of employers.)*

- 8.) Students earn college credits/degrees from an accredited institution certified by their community college's regional accreditation association, their state's higher education association, and other accrediting bodies. *(Community colleges are held to high, rigid standards established by state, regional and national accreditation associations as they strive to meet their mission and institutional goals. Their students earn college credits that are transferable to colleges and universities across the country for the attainment of a Bachelor's degree.)*
- 9.) Class sizes tend to be smaller in community colleges. *(Students are afforded the opportunity to receive individualized attention, instruction and guidance.)*
- 10.) Student Success. *(Upon successful completion, students earn an associate's degree, graduate from the community college with an opportunity to pursue further studies at a 4 year college or university through transfer, seek upward mobility at their current place of employment, or enter the job market.)*

The Light of Knowledge and Reason: Some Essential Competencies that B-20 Faculty Need to Master in Order to Facilitate Student Success

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ABSTRACT

This paper is one in a series of papers to come associated with the novel concept of The Cognitive Lens (CL) Model (Atherton & Hines, 2013) which focuses on multifarious factors that work simultaneously to initiate the inception and development of individuals' cognitive lens which impact student adjustment specifically within the context of school. The purpose of this paper is to focus on a specific component of the model—School—discussing crucial competencies that faculty and teachers must have that positively impact their pedagogical practice to facilitate student success. Educational implications are also addressed in relation to the different constructs focused on in the paper. The authors are by no means suggesting that their offering is the answer to all educational issues of student failure; rather, the contribution is provided as a fresh way to look at the issues hindering 21st century education.

Key Words: Cognitive Lens, cogent flexibility, veteran expert, novice expert, cultural proactivity, culturally responsive, cultural congruency, cultural competence, cultural legacy, sense of belonging, emotional risk, and critical thinking.

Theory and empirical research provide a plethora of constructs and paradigms focused on skills and competencies that teachers (in-service and pre-service) should develop to support students' positive adjustment—for example, Marzano's Nine Instructional Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning—in B-12 educational institutions. Another paradigm can be seen in Sizemore's (1989) work; her book, *Effective Schools: Critical Issues in the Education of Black Children*, addressed practices categorized as routines (ten) that serve to fast-track, promote, and advance students' success and that should be utilized in training within educational institutes and systems.

There is also a body of work focused on principles of effective teaching for faculty in institutions of higher learning. For instance, Ramsden (2003) in his book, *Learning to Teach in Higher Education*, provide six learning principles that faculty in institutions of higher education can utilize to support their professional development. Atherton and Hines (2013) in their unpublished paper based on the Cognitive Lens Model (see figure1) endorse previous offerings from varied sources in terms of competencies for effective practice and student success. Some of the traits they highlight include high teacher efficacy, intentionality, the ability to utilize multiple instructional strategies to ensure that every day every student is given an opportunity to experience successful learning and positive adjustment within diverse learning environments throughout school, effective communication skills, the capacity to engage in and model critical thinking, cogent flexibility, the ability to engage in on-going reflection, holding high expectations for all students, ensuring that content is interesting, engaging in the learning and

instructional process as one of the learners within the community (understanding even as an expert one can gain knowledge from students), accepting students by respecting them and getting to know them in order to best support their needs, and equipping students with self-regulating strategies (Epstein, 2009; Regan, 2012; Larivee, 2000; Bulger, Mohr, & Walls, 2002; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). Even as consideration is given to the competencies outlined, it is important to note that there is not one explicit guaranteed approach; rather, there are diverse ideologies and strategies that can be utilized in concert based on the specific students in question that would facilitate student success.

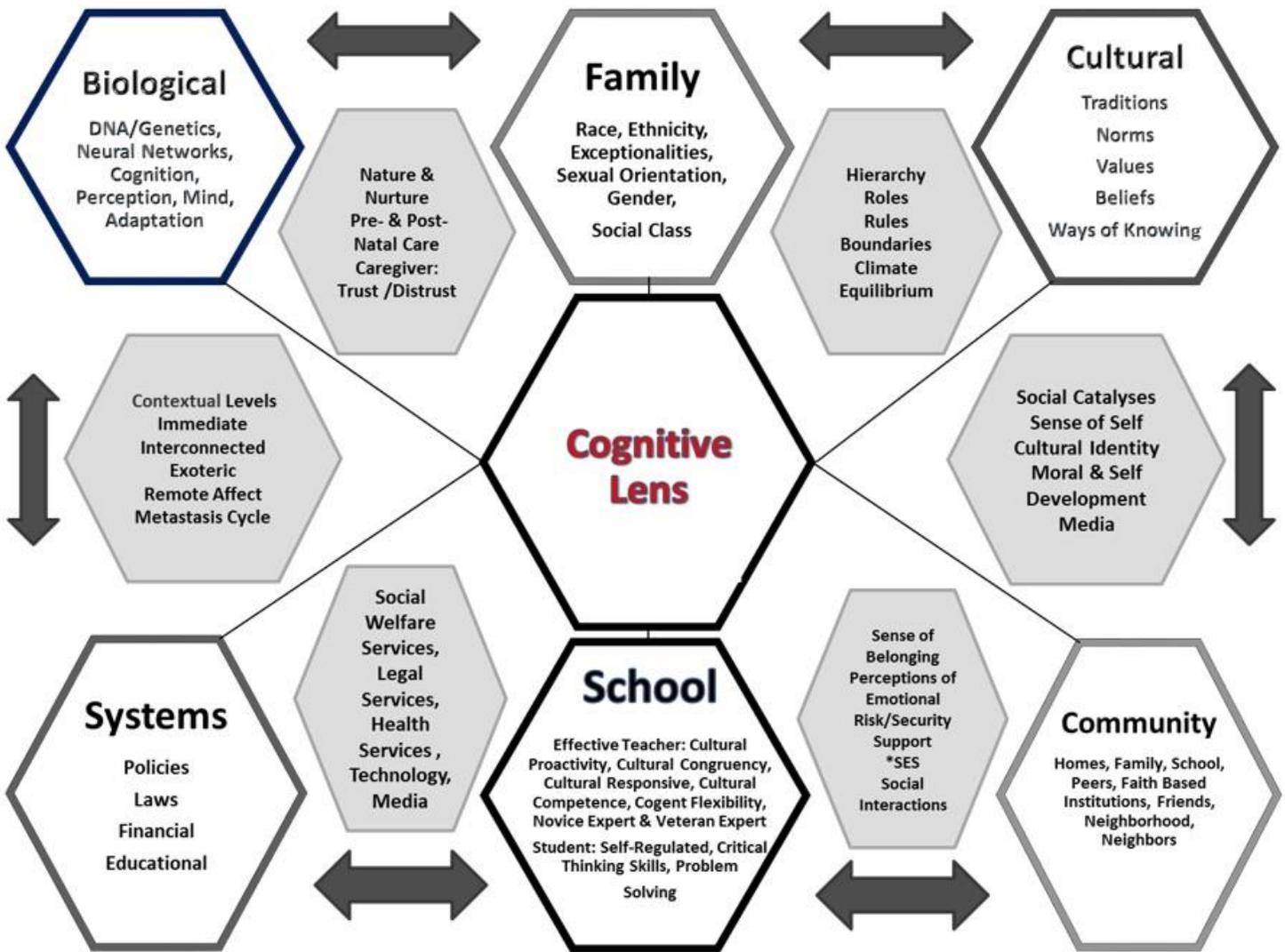
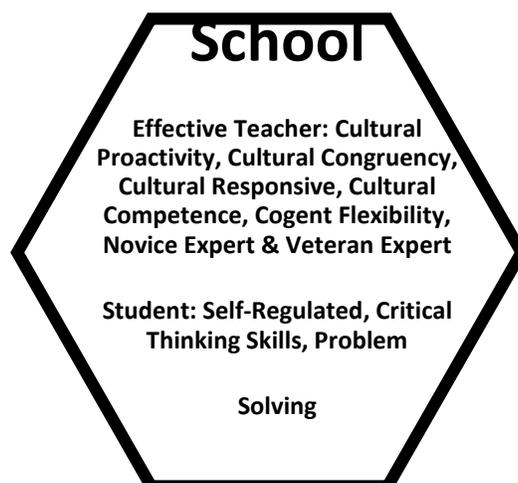


Figure 1: Cognitive Lens Model

While the qualities and routines aforementioned are fundamental characteristics and practices, which the Cognitive Lens support that effective teachers evidence and in which they engage, they are not quite comprehensive in that they do not consider the crucial four Cs’ (cultural proactivity, culturally responsive pedagogy, cultural congruence, and cultural competence) as put forward in the Cognitive Lens Model (CL). Also, given the educational disparities that are still evident in classrooms throughout America in the 21st century—as supported by NCES 2011 data—as well as, the focus on the gifted and talented (Baker, 2013), it is important to examine other competencies that could positively impact students in general and more specifically, many more students of color gaining entry into more rigorous classes that foster their ability to develop critical thinking skills. Thus, a critical piece of the puzzle that should be addressed is the concept of the four cultural competencies as embedded within the CL model that 21st century teachers need to have in their tool box. The theory advocates the case that faculty in higher education institutions as well as, in-service and pre-service teachers must develop the capacity to employ culturally proactive (“cultural proactivity”) actions and behaviors, to be culturally responsive to the needs of students within their care, to practice cultural congruency, and develop cultural competence to expedite the positive adjustment of all students. In order for higher education faculty and pre-service and in-service teachers to acquire and cultivate these qualities department heads and deans across colleges/departments in higher education institutions, teacher programs within institutions of higher education and school principals/educational directors (B-12) must make available on-going professional development and curriculum that address these vital components that facilitate the progress and development of these competencies and in turn the cognitive lens of higher education faculty as well as in-service and pre-service teachers.

Figure 2: School Component



The concept of “cultural proactivity” speaks to faculty, pre-service and in-service teachers’ cognizance of their own identities and the identities of their diverse students. But, it is even more profound than this; culturally proactive individuals in addition to becoming aware, they acquire, consume, examine and evaluate information in order to develop knowledge initially about their own cultural legacy and successively their students’ culture. Knowledge of one’s own cultural heritage supports openness to primarily learning about and consequently positively recognizing other individuals’ cultural legacies. This, in turn, develops the individual’s cognitive lens so that it allows faculty and teachers to develop curriculum that is more reflective of all students. It can also facilitate faculty and teachers’ ability to consider the diverse ways of knowing with which diverse students come. Culturally proactive individuals do not believe that their own cultural ways of thinking and behaving characterize or are symbolic of the nature of people and so is the correct way to reason or act (as supported by Parrish & Linder-VanBerschot, 2010). Rather, they seriously consider other ways of knowing that are culturally diverse than their own. Additionally, gaining knowledge of other cultures promotes the idea that there is not a single story, which can be dangerous because of stereotypes, but that there are multifarious perspectives and experiences that exist within every context. Possible positive outcomes include students developing the ability to accept, respect, and think critically about another person’s perspective. Also, students who see reflections of themselves in the curriculum will come to more readily value what they learn within the context of school even when home and community values may differ from that of school. It also opens the door for mutual respect and acceptance by all stakeholders within the learning environment. Commensurate with this, other students learn to value their peers who may be diverse from them in terms of race, learning styles, etc.

“Cultural proactivity” leads or lends itself to culturally responsive teaching (supported by Gay, 2010; Ladson Billings, 2010). Not only will culturally proactive faculty and teachers utilize the analogy of the mirror with regard to the curriculum, they will also learn about their students in terms of their learning styles. The cognitive lens that these faculty and teachers utilize will be impacted by the knowledge they have of what students value and the learning styles of all students including diverse students. Many students of color, like African Americans, Latinos, and Indigenous/Native Americans learn through teamwork. Within these cultures, cooperative learning is greatly valued in preference to academic competition. Children from these cultures as well as Asian children are taught that the good of the community is more important than the good of the individual (as supported by Herndon, 2013). Also significant, many children particularly boys tend to need more physical activity in addition to kinesthetic learning activities. An educational implication is that faculty and teachers in B-20 institutions do not only need to get to know their students, but also need to proactively plan instruction that considers different ways of knowing—learning styles and cultural learning styles/traditions. With such knowledge and understanding, the cognitive lens that faculty and teachers utilize as they work with all students will support their capacity to provide culturally responsive pedagogy that facilitate student success.

Educators who learn to become “Cultural proactivity” and engage in culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy facilitates cultural congruency. The concept of cultural congruence entails knowing and respecting diverse cultures in terms of backgrounds, cultures, and languages of diverse students (Zeichner, 1995). Crucial as well to this competence is the necessity for faculty and educators to develop universal knowledge of sociocultural factors associated with human development, acquisition of a second language, and the manner in which socio economic

contexts, language, and culture impact performance in school (in line with the Vygotskian perspective). Ultimately, faculty and teachers must construct perspectives of their own racial and cultural identities so as to have the capacity to comprehend, regard, and respect those of their students. This enables both higher education faculty and teachers in B-12 institutions to comprehend how their cultural prejudices may affect their personal judgments in relation to students' performance, as well as, hinder students' capacity to learn.

This perspective is directly in line with the Cognitive Lens perspective. The phenomenon of cultural congruence from the Cognitive Lens viewpoint involves faculty and teachers' ability to move beyond cultural awareness. Faculty (B-20) must not only be cognizant of their own cultural identity and the cultural identity of their students'; they must also come to understand the complexities associated with traditions, norms, values, beliefs, ways of knowing, and other facets of cultural identity. Also fundamental to the phenomenon of cultural congruency from the cognitive lens perspective is one's acceptance of one's own and other peoples' culture differences and similarities between and across cultures. In alignment with the Cognitive Lens Theory, when one experiences cognitive congruence, one embraces one's own cultural identity and is able to support cultural perspectives that are diverse in nature from one's own. Faculty (B-20) who experience cultural congruency comprehend and appreciate that diversity should be celebrated and viewed as gifts and the differences not to be feared or seen as disadvantages or handicaps. Rather, faculty (B-20) would utilize the knowledge to support student success as well as, enhancing their own pedagogical skill set. Faculty who experience cultural congruency, understand that the success of underrepresented, underserved, and disenfranchised individuals positively impacts everyone; specifically, when consideration is given to the economic growth and advantages to the nation that can be derived from ensuring a more literate population (as suggested in Close the Gap: The Itasca Project, 2005).

Commensurate with this, identity development is fundamental to the development of "cultural proactivity" and cultural congruency. Different identity development models deal with various races, sexual orientations, socioeconomics and socialization of individuals; these should be employed in the educational process not only for the holistic development of students, but also for the efficacy of faculty, teachers, families, and community members. Notably, there are multifarious models to consider in terms of similarities and differences. One goal should be to emphasize and capture the stages on the Majority and Minority Identity Development models to foster an overall sense of cultural proactivity and congruence to not only succeed in a multicultural society or globally, but address and strive for a more pluralistic society that speaks to the acknowledgment and respect of cultures in lieu of tolerance. This should facilitate the progress from deficit ideologies to more assets based education in terms of culture, traditions, norms, policies, laws, and practice not only just in B-12 institutions, but also in institutions of higher education.

The educational implication associated with faculty (B-20) and other school and college/university employees experiencing cultural congruency due to their engagement in culturally proactive pursuits, culturally responsive teaching/undertakings, and culturally relevant pedagogy is that they become culturally competent individuals who contribute to the positive adjustment of all students within the context of school/college/university. Culturally competent faculty positively impact school culture because they comprehend and appreciate their own cultural identity and are open to learning about their students' cultural ways of knowing and

learning styles, understanding students' family structures, teaching curriculum that is inclusive and reflective of students, addressing the multiple stories in preference to one story, and are accepting and supportive of diverse cultures (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Ramsden, 2003).

Another component vital to student success relates to expertise, specifically the novel conception of novice and veteran experts. The difference between novice experts and veteran experts is the degree or level of experience and proficiency they evidence. Thus, novice experts have the same qualities and abilities, as do their more experienced counterparts; however, novice experts operate at a lower level of expertise than do (veteran) seasoned experts. Some components that lend themselves but are not limited to expertise include intentionality (every action is supported by a sound rationale), critical thinking, cogent flexibility (knowing when and how to adapt), use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, "cultural proactivity", culturally responsive teaching, cultural competence, and cultural congruency. As individuals move along the cultural spectrum, their learning needs to be continually assessed (Sizemore, 1989) for cultivation and a continuing shift in their paradigms. An educational implication is that educators in education programs embedded in higher education institutions along with school superintendents and principals respectively in B-12 institutions need to provide course work and professional development programs that support pre-service and in-service teachers with the ability to engage in the instructional and learning process initially as novice experts and with time as veteran experts who consistently develop, practice, and hone their skills with the intent to facilitate students' positive adjustment within the instructional and learning context (Atherton, 2010; Farmer et al., 2007; Hamm & Faircloth, 2005a). Having presented this notion, there is also a need for faculty in institutions of higher education who have expertise in their respective fields to gain pedagogical expertise initially at the novice level and with time at the veteran stage. Very few higher education faculty receive methodology classes. One may have expert knowledge, in relation to one's academic domain; however, that does not necessitate knowledge of how to impart the information in multiple modes. In regard to the novice expert and veteran expert phenomenon, both of these experts need to demonstrate characteristics that are in alignment with the skills and competencies previously mentioned (as supported by Marzano, Ramsden, 2003; Sizemore, 1989), "The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education" (NCATE) standards, as well as with other recognized accreditation boards. Specifically, the Cognitive Lens theory and model promotes the idea that faculty, pre-service teachers and in-service teachers must gain knowledge, strategies, skills, and tools that experts have including having the capacity to present information in multiple ways—to provide opportunities for every student to learn—being culturally competent, culturally congruent, culturally proactive, engaging in culturally responsive pedagogy, and utilizing both cognitive and metacognitive strategies (including knowing what strategies to utilize and when as well as, how to utilize cognitive strategies in their craft) to reiterate a few. However, the theory also maintains that even as faculty and both pre-service and many in-service teachers acquire the skills and attributes of master pedagogues (i.e. expert instructors), they may still be at the novice level in terms of proficiency and experience.

An educational implication relating to faculty and in-service and pre-service teachers' mastery of the four Cs' and the other core competencies addressed earlier is the impact on student's perceptions of emotional risk is connected to their sense of belonging within the educational contexts in which they hold membership. In relation to facilitation of students' sense of belonging, faculty, teachers, administrators, and others within the context of

school/college/university (including classrooms, courses, libraries, clubs, playground, cafeteria, etc.) need to set a classroom and campus culture that is both welcoming and accepting of all members of the collective. Sense of belonging has been conceptualized by McMillan and Chavis (1986) as individuals having the feeling that they have a position in the group, a sense that they are significant to others within the collective, a sense that their needs are satisfied, and they experience a mutual emotional connection. Expressly, sense of belonging can be demarcated as the understanding one has about a specific context, a notion that affiliates are significant to each other and the consortium, as well as, all members hold a common view that the wants of everyone in the collective will be satisfied because of their allegiance (Atherton, 2010, McMillan & Chavis, 1986, McMillan, 1976). The sense of belonging that individuals experience within the context of school/college/University can facilitate perceptions of emotional security or emotionally risky conditions.

In school/college/university settings, one way to conceptualize emotional safety is in relation to the risk students perceive in participating in academic settings (Hamm and Faircloth, 2005a). These researchers explicitly intellectualized this construct as emotional riskiness. Students may view their classrooms (B-20) as unaccommodating environments (supported in Atherton, 2010; Hamm & Faircloth, 2005a). Such social situations may be perceived by students as not extending social or academic support because they do not provide opportunities for students to express their views or engage in discourse (as supported by Osterman, 2000). Within academic contexts, many students have concerns about derision by peers for actively participating in classroom undertakings or seeming too intelligent; this sometimes leads to classroom disconnection and conflict with educators (as supported by Atherton, 2010; Juvonen, 2010; Juvonen & Murdock, 1995). In classes in which responses are viewed as correct or incorrect and faculty and teachers are established as the main authority (note: there is a demonstrative difference in being an authoritative teacher/faculty and an authoritarian teacher/faculty) on students' thoughts and offerings disengagement may be even more pronounced (Atherton, 2010; Hamm & Faircloth, 2005a; Juvonen, 2000; Juvonen & Murdock, 1995). In connection, the cognitive lens proposes that students would benefit if they experience peer support and insignificant emotional threat for their endeavors and contributions (Atherton, 2010; Osterman, 2000). Furthermore, within different academic settings when opportunities are provided for students to collaborate and engage in discourse and other like positive social interactions, they are apt to stimulate further prosocial behaviors that support success (Atherton, 2010; Osterman, 2000). Given this, it is obligatory for faculty, administrators, and staff in B-20 contexts to promote academic cultures in which students have these positive experiences that support positive adjustment within the context of learning environments. These experiences in accordance with the Cognitive Lens theory should be strongly associated with students' overall positive adjustment.

Corresponding with this line of thinking, the theory (i.e. the cognitive lens) further proposes that in academic settings, faculty, administrators, and other staff need to provide and set up a culture that fosters terms of membership within the collective (i.e., classroom/school/college/university), common goals, and analogous beliefs, traditions, norms, and values that support the insight that all are accepted, appreciated and valued, the use of culturally responsive pedagogy, genuinely considering the perspectives of others, and an awareness that within educational contexts, all students need to have perceptions of emotional security rather than emotional risk. The same is true for faculty of color in B-20 institutions. They must be given authentic experiences that promote a sense of belonging and perceptions of emotional security. The implication here is that

mentorship, continual support through professional development, initiation, promotion, and maintenance of cultural awareness and competence, and development of a cultural tradition that recognizes, accepts, and celebrates cultural differences must emerge. When considering the changing demographics of the American society with the influx of both, White and people of color from different countries as well as, the increase in domestic Brown and Black populations, the matter relating to the recruitment and retention of people of color as faculty, teachers, and administrators within educational organizations and systems must be addressed. An inference which can be drawn is that as populations of color grow so too must faculty of color increase in quantity in educational institutions. Also fundamental to securing student success, all faculty, teachers, and administrators at different educational institutions in a myriad of contexts must gain the expertise discussed herein.

In conclusion, if we are to effectively serve 21st century students in B-20 educational institutions, it is necessary for faculty, teachers (in-service and pre-service), and administrators to receive training and on-going professional development that would support their capacity to engage in the type of practice that is reflective of an expert (whether at the novice or veteran levels respectively), culturally responsive, culturally proactive pursuits, and to become culturally congruent and culturally competent individuals. Also, consideration must be given to how cultural competency is a policy issue in closing the cultural achievement gap as well as how it correlates to accreditation bodies in higher education and professional teacher association bodies such as: The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), Association of American Educators (AAE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). In 2008, the National Education Association (NEA) identified three strategies which states can utilize to increase educators' cultural competence: 1) preservice education, 2) ongoing professional development, and 3) licensure. The policy brief asserts that only one-third of states require teacher candidates to study some aspect of cultural diversity as part of their core preparation and/or experience a teaching practicum in a context that is culturally diverse. Only nine states currently have separate state standards specific to cultural knowledge or competence. The remaining states incorporate standards related to cultural awareness in their history or transcontinental (or world) language standards. We believe that the first two elements from the brief are essential and vital in helping to close the achievement gap in relation to students of color. We question, however, the extent to which assessment of individuals' cultural competence as a part of the licensure process—state and national teacher licensure exams—occurs. Furthermore, the assumption that pre-service teachers will develop these competencies must be addressed more acutely and assessed in their pre-service programs prior to their licensure exams. Statistically valid and reliable assessments are available to address where both groups (preservice and in-service) teachers are on the spectrum of their ethnocentric and ethno relative development; the assessment serves as a GPS mechanism in which individuals' cultural congruency can be assessed and evaluated, development of the cognitive lens can be facilitated, and intentional learning and instruction and professional development for all educators can be supported. However, there seems to be a fear factor associated with cultural and intercultural development in the assessment of what teachers should know and be able to do. Institutions and teachers are accredited by bodies that impact diverse learners. Considering this, assessing cultural competence prior to licensure examination is essential in the preparation of pre-service teachers in working with diverse learners which will further support development of their

cognitive lens in their practicum setting. In line with this, in-service teachers must be willing to assess their cultural competence as the information could facilitate shifts in and development of their cognitive lens and paradigms addressing their preconceived notions and focusing on their cultural perceptual maps and filters for the positive adjustment of not only students, but also themselves.

According to the National Education Association (2008) in addition to their standards, Alaska provides an all-encompassing approach to educators' cultural competence which addresses the preparation of culturally responsive teachers, culturally responsive school boards, nurturing culturally healthy children, respecting cultural knowledge, strengthening indigenous and world languages, and implementing cross-cultural programs. While this is commendable, the assessment piece is fundamental; it is essential to assess educators' cultural competence and report findings so that subsequent to assessment and evaluation more informed decisions can be made to positively impact policy. We also assert that understanding aspects of family systems theory is not only the role of school psychologists and social workers, but also the role of the teachers and faculty in understanding family hierarchies, rules, roles, climate and equilibrium. These are fundamental and a must in ongoing teacher, faculty, and administrator training and development for building relationships and to open up effective communication with diverse students and diverse families to develop, enhance, and sustain active engagement with diverse students and diverse families for the success of all students.

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The Need for Multiculturalism in the Higher Education Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Multicultural education is one of the powerful tenets that a teacher can use to teach students in the global society. Knowledge and respect for the cultures that exist within a classroom exert a wide range of effects on the students. Thus, knowledge and respect for other cultures promotes greater appreciation for individuals from different backgrounds. The greater appreciation allows the students to function well in the company of others from different races, creeds, or ethnic backgrounds. The major concerns must be that of how students' school learning more effective in their endeavor to appreciate diversity. Multicultural education fosters positive behaviors, and it is a must within this global society; therefore, it is imperative that higher education foster and promote cultural global competency via welcoming and embracing multiculturalism into the classroom.

THE NEED FORMULTICULTRURALISM IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOM

As we face new students each year in our college classrooms, administrators, educational directors, and instructors must be aware that the inevitable issues of teaching multiculturalism will come up again and again. Advocates for teaching about diversity and the importance of exploring other cultures in the classroom—sometimes meet colleagues who disagree with the concept. Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process (Banks, 1997). As an idea, multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms. Multicultural education is a process because its goals are ideals that teachers and administrators should constantly strive to achieve.

Multicultural education is instruction designed for the cultures of several different races in an educational system (Banks, 2008, p. 45). This approach to teaching is based upon consensus building, respect, and fostering cultural pluralism within racial societies; Multicultural education acknowledges and incorporates positive racial idiosyncrasies into the classroom atmosphere. According to Banks (2008), he noted that Multicultural education from a global prospective allows all students to reach their potential as learners (p. 48).

One of the comments invariably heard is “culture does not belong in the classroom” (Gorski, 2007). First, classrooms do not exist in a vacuum. Every student must deal with cultural issues on a regular basis and, if he or she intends to be successful in an increasingly global community—then he or she must know how to interact with people from other cultures. Just because our region is fairly homogeneous does not mean students will not encounter people from other cultures, nor does it mean that students will not appreciate the skills for learning and living in multicultural society (Gorski, 2004, p. 68). Culture does belong in the classroom. Of course, the purpose of education is to prepare students for life outside the classroom and involve them in the process of learning globally.

Though a family’s culture is taught at home, no one should expect a student to know everything about his or her culture. Learning about ourselves is a continuous process, which occurs at all times—not just class instruction time. Finally, it is appropriate that all cultures, especially those represented in higher educational classrooms, must be taught and respected. Minority students should not be expected to give up their culture and identity to take on the culture of the teacher, nor should they be asked to relinquish their own language or put aside their own culture to develop the “civilized” notions of the world and society. In short, all students, in particular minority students must be taught to respect and cherish their own culture without feeling ashamed.

As our higher educational system continues to advance and grow, it has become increasingly evident that culture affects students as surely as textbooks and teachers. Today, technology has brought the world into our homes through television, travel, telephones and the Internet. “The information age has made the global village a reality and higher education must be structured and ready to meet the needs of the twenty-first century student” (Stearns, 2009). It’s important to stress the value of multicultural education in higher education—globally. Hence, as each new academic year begins, educators do not need to debate whether culture belongs in the college classroom; it is already there.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education is one of the most influential factors to affect higher education (Lucas, 2011). Juste (2009) posit that higher educational faculty should promote multiculturalism by global learning—meaning studying aboard (p.78). Community colleges and universities with egalitarian and democratic principles are philosophically more supportive of meeting diverse student needs and student diversity than any other type of institution in higher education (Stoll, 1995). The challenges of embracing multiculturalism are many. However, to be effective the change must be systemic, addressing the multiple facets of an institution. These factors include student recruitment and retention, hiring practices, reward systems, policies and practices, student services and activities, and curriculum development. According Heffeman and Pole (2005), both Canada and New Zealand worked to be aligned with universities in the United Kingdom by increasing the numbers of Australian universities offshore *education* partnerships—particularly in the Asia-Pacific region (p. 225). This alone ensured that diversity and multiculturalism was implemented via global learning.

More so, another challenge facing multicultural education is—terming of vocabulary. There are several terms that are congruous and incongruous to multiculturalism. They often include: cross-

cultural, cultural awareness, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural sensitivity, diversity, globalization, intercultural, international, pluralism, multiethnic and the list goes on. To confuse the issue further, multiculturalism is used in a variety of contexts. Multiculturalism can be an idea, concept, educational reform movement or a process for institutional change (Banks, 1997).

Another challenge of developing multicultural education is institutions have different notions about what the education looks like. Goodstein (1994) notes, "While many academics support greater emphasis on cultural diversity, there is not always agreement on what cultural diversity is or how it should be infused into the undergraduate curriculum" (p.103). Gorski (2010) asserts that Multicultural education is a progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and responds to discriminatory policies and practices in education (p. 2). Also, he contends that it is firmly grounded in ideals of social justice, education equity, critical pedagogy, and a dedication to providing educational experiences in which all students reach their full potentials as learners and as socially aware and active beings, locally, nationally, and globally. Multicultural education acknowledges that schools are essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society and the elimination of injustice. Howard (1993) stresses, "The future calls each of us to become partners in the dance of diversity, a dance in which everyone share the lead." Multicultural learning must begin at birth and be continually nurtured through family and the efforts of higher education.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are several reasons why multicultural education is important in higher education. Piland and Silva (1996) posits that multicultural education is an attempt to bring social change and teach cultural sensitivity by means of globally education. Banks (1997) asserts the function of multicultural education is to enhance students' ability to function in an increasingly diverse society and to empower them to make a difference. Gorski (2010) provide the most comprehensive argument for multicultural education. It is as follows:

To understand and appreciate the knowledge and traditions within the contemporary United States, and to understand the central role of cultural, racial and ethnic differences in the formation of our U.S. national identity; to evaluate how men and women of diverse origins have shaped their visions of self and community, and interrelationships of self and community; to consider ways various social groups within a given society participate in the culture of their society; to identify, explore and evaluate concrete examples of the students' own cultural heritage in relationship to other heritages; and to develop the ability to read a culture through its cultural expressions and the ability to see relationships, contrasts, parallels, commonalities and interactions among various cultures (p. 443).

According Bennett (1995), he identified two different goals for multicultural education. They are variety and critical perspective. Variety is providing information about groups that may have received insufficient attention in traditional curricula. Critical perspective is directly and indirectly affecting the social climate of the institutions and the world beyond. Bennett argues that the goal of variety meets the initial needs of multicultural education, but critical perspective is necessary for long-term student, global training, institutional advancement, and social transformation.

Assessing outcomes of multicultural education is important for students, faculty, and higher institutions. A variety of outcomes including information learned, retention, and academic success have been studied in relation to development of multicultural education globally (Bennett, 1995). Students that take courses with multicultural content are reported to have learned the following: cultural artifacts, such as beliefs, values, lifestyles, symbols and rituals of cultural groups; characteristics and history of cultural groups; contributions of minorities to American society; injustices suffered by people in various cultural groups in American society and communication systems of cultural groups (Gorski, 2007). Developing multicultural education provides students with relevant examples and role models that have been overlooked in the past. Multicultural education improves retention rates, as well as academic success, student involvement, student satisfaction, and a connection between students and the college and the university (Amosa & Gorski, 2008).

CONCLUSION

Multicultural education is an essential piece in developing a comprehensive higher educational classroom within the institution and a globally educated student. However, in order for multicultural education to be effective changes in policy and hiring practices, development of appropriate curriculum, student services and activities to support students in their development is critical. Higher educational institutions (meaning community colleges and universities) have the responsibility of educating a reflective cross section of America and abroad.

Educational leaders must help to create innovative ways to incorporate a multicultural learning environment that infuses a curriculum of diversity for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. It is the creation of new ideas and solutions that, ultimately, will lead to new industries and jobs for the 21st century and beyond.

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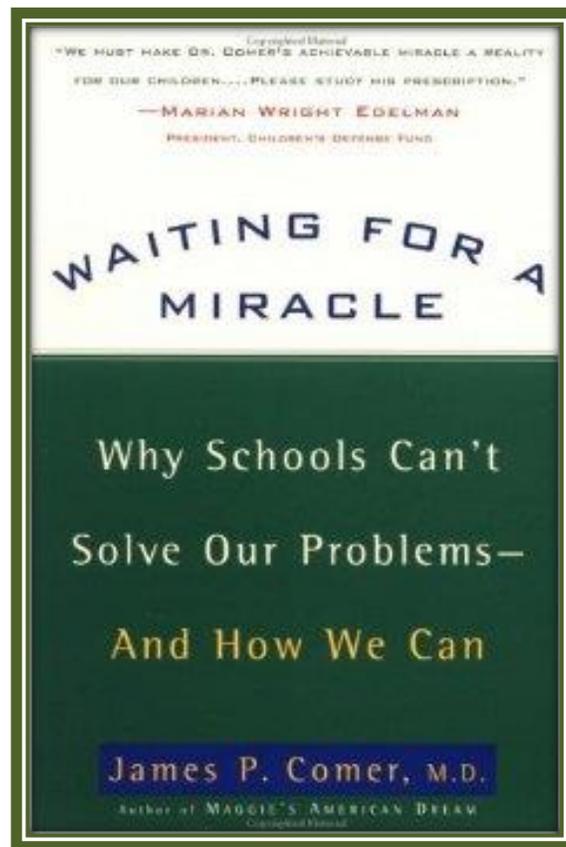
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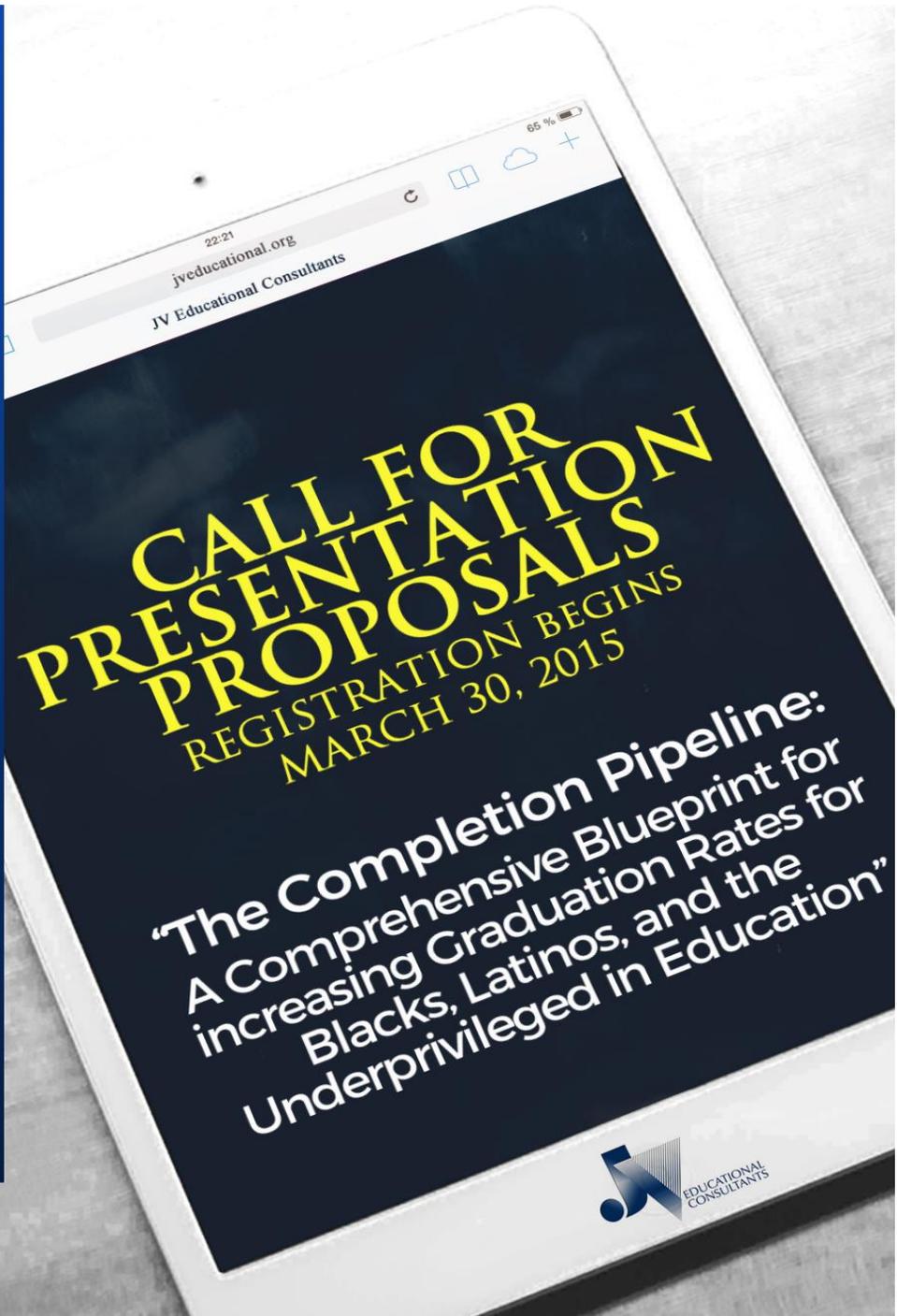
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