



School District of Indian River County

6500 57th Street • Vero Beach, Florida, 32967 • Telephone: 772-564-3000 • Fax: 772-564-3054

OSLO MIDDLE SCHOOL

DATE: 6/12/20

Research and implement a student to student peer mentorship program for African American students

Researchers have called for innovative and culturally responsive intervention programs to enhance male, African American middle school students' academic achievement. Mentoring has received considerable attention as a novel remedy. Although anecdotal evidence supports the positive role of mentoring on academic achievement, these results are not consistent. The Benjamin E. Mays Institute (BEMI) builds on the ideals of mentoring to counter the effects academic underachievement among adolescent Black males by building a model that is Afro-centric, uses pro-social modeling, and emphasizes cultural strengths and pride, and single-sex instruction in a dual-sex educational environment. Sixty-one middle-school Black males were enrolled (BEMI: n=29; Comparison: n=32) in this study. Results revealed that students in the BEMI program had significantly greater academic attachment scores and academic success than their non-mentored peers. Additionally, racial identity attitudes of immersion/emersion and internalization and identification with academics were also significantly associated with standardized achievement tests and GPA. Policy and practice implications are discussed.

[J Negro Educ.](#) Author manuscript; available in PMC 2010 Apr 7.

Published in final edited form as:

[J Negro Educ.](#) 2009 Jul 1; 78(3): 277–289.

A myriad of studies have documented how institutional, environmental, and individual factors contribute to the achievement gap between Black and White students (Stinson, 2006). While education is the institution used in America to distribute social status, distribute economic power, and facilitate how society functions, it has not accepted and provided equal opportunity to all members of this society ([Ogbu, 1997, 2003](#)). Understanding how education is used to distribute the resources of society requires careful attention to the factors that preclude and those that promote equal opportunity and academic success for African American youth, and specifically boys (Stinson, 2006). Many of the studies that examine academic differences have been deficit-focused with emphasis on lower standardized test scores compared to White students, the experience of cultural deprivation and structural discrimination, an "anti-intellectual" attitude, and less socialization to education achievement ([Cokley, 2003](#); Griffin & Allen, 2006; [Ogbu, 2003](#); Stinson, 2006). A burgeoning amount of investigations have begun to examine the factors that foster the academic success and achievement of African American students including mentoring, racial identity, and identification with academics ([Awad, 2007](#); [Datnow, & Cooper, 1998](#); [Harris, 1999](#); [Osborne, 1999](#); [Witherspoon, Speight, & Thomas, 1997](#)).

Here at Oslo Middle we have an Achievers in Action club that started in August of 2018. African American students are members and are paired with a peer mentor in the club or school. This club meets once a month to discuss various topics about life skills, goals and objectives, career choices, and college readiness.

2019-2020 The Achievers in Action club had over 40 students.

"Educate and inspire every student to be successful"

Dr. Mara Schiff
District 1

• Jacqueline Rosario
District 2

• Laura Zorc
District 3

• Teri L. Barenborg
District 4

• Tiffany M. Justice
District 5

"Serving ALL students with excellence"
Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer