ESI Expanded Success Initiative

NYC Department of Education
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DISCUSSION GUIDE TO "SUCCEEDING IN THE CITY."

The Succeeding in the City report is a seminal study of Black and Latino male high school achievement in the 40 ESI schools. The report provides key findings about how successful Black and Latino male students navigate the demands of high school and the transitions to college. Professor Shaun Harper and his team of researchers from the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at U Penn interviewed 415 Black and Latino male students who currently attend, or graduated from ESI schools. Using an anti-deficit approach, this study shares insights from Black and Latino young men who become college and career ready and persevere through college. ESI is a research and development initiative that seeks to learn from the experiences of our schools as well as the Best-in-class research on Black and Latino male achievement. This report offers an opportunity for our schools to review the key findings and to think about the implications for policies, procedures, and practices across the three areas of school operations: Academics, Youth Development, and School Culture. This discussion guide is a tool to help facilitate critical conversations that emerge from the 22 findings in this important report on the 40 ESI schools. Please read carefully through the report and identify two or three findings you would like to explore deeply with other staff members at your school.

ACADEMICS

PART 1 – ANALYZE KEY FINDINGS ON ACADEMICS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- ***Succeeding in the City*** finds that successful Black and Latino young men spent on average 1.6 hours on schoolwork at home. Students in the study also confessed that they don't do much studying either. However, they were able to grasp content mostly by asking questions and taking notes. The students also met with teachers right after class for additional help.
- Is this the case in your school? If so, how does your school deal with this issue?
- Given that Black and Latino young men in this study learned content from being in class, what are the implications for how your school structures classroom instruction?
- These students also displayed effective classroom behaviors that allowed them to be successful in school. How would your school explicitly teach these behaviors as an integral part of the curriculum?

Key Findings	What questions does this raise?	What are the implications for your school?

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

PART 2 – ANALYZE KEY FINDINGS ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- ***Succeeding in the City*** reveals that successful Black and Latino young men spent a lot time in after-school activities at their school. They cited that school was a safe environment in which they could be with teachers and peers n structured learning activities (e.g. tutoring, SAT prep, etc) as well unstructured time to socialize. The researchers observed that there was a great culture of trust.
- Given that the extended hours were an essential component to the success of Black and Latino young men in this study, How can your school be more deliberate about creating a culture of trust in which students want to stay after school with their teachers and peers?
- On the other hand, while many Black and Latino young men in this study felt comfortable meeting with their teachers and peers after class, Research shows that they don't connect with their professors in the same productive ways they do with their teachers in high school. Furthermore, they are not as skillful at mobilizing resources in their college for their own development. How can your school create opportunities for students to learn and practice self-advocacy and self-efficacy skills?

Key Findings	What questions does this raise?	What are the implications for your school?

School Culture

Part 3 – Analyze key findings on School Culture

- ***Succeeding in the City*** researchers found that most schools were very intentional about creating a college-going culture. They did this by putting up poster size spreadsheets that outline student names and whether they were on track with SAT, college applications, college essays, and FAFSA applications. In many of the ESI schools teachers doubled as guidance counselors and mentors. The researchers saw that the creation of a college-going culture was not the sole responsibility of the guidance counselor. How is your entire school galvanized to create a college-going culture? A persistent problem that arose in the study was under matching and mis-matching qualified Black and Latino young men? How will your school make sure that every qualified student is matched to competitive colleges?

Key Findings	What questions does this raise?	What are the implications for your school?

Part 4 – Action plan

- ***Activity: Decision Points***

Prioritize a list of findings you would like to address. See the example below

Findings	*Action Steps: short and long term*	*Who will be responsible? By when?*
1. Undermatching of Black and Latino males	***Short term**: Guidance Review of all student data and match students to a range of colleges possibilities. Provide a robust rigorous program of honors and AP courses. PSAT/ SAT prep courses.* ***Long term**: Invite, visit, and establish relationships with admission officers of competitive colleges and universities.*	*Guidance Team/Mentors*