

**THE LEARNING COMMUNITY PERFORMANCE GAP
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL**

An Analysis of African American Achievement at Oak Park and River Forest High School

Final Report

Presented by

The African American Achievement Study Team
(AAAST)

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District 200

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African American Achievement Study Team (AAAST) worked for more than two years to investigate and to achieve systemic understandings of the achievement gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS). Because of the findings and conclusions of its extensive study, the AAAST ultimately designated this district's achievement gap as a learning community performance gap. This designation was deliberately selected after a single cause or a cluster of relevant data, facts and evidence proved to be insufficient in descriptive and explanatory value. The steady emergence of multiple causes, associations, dimensions and relations among and from a series of known facts, perceptions, hypotheses and lived experiences validated this choice as both an accurate descriptor and a pertinent explanation. Although there is no single explanation for the existence of the gap at OPRFHS, several critical aspects substantiate it as a learning community performance gap. Regardful of the many relevant concepts typically used to convey the meaning and the nature of the gap, none was more compelling nor more robust in capturing the multidimensional, complicated and complex issues presented in the AAAST report and communicated through its title than *The Learning Community Performance Gap At Oak Park And River Forest High School*.

Oak Park and River Forest High School seeks to educate all students. The school rightly and emphatically articulates this commitment not only in its mission statement but also in its formal and informal communications with students, parents, community members and the general public. Because the mean academic performance of African American students is consistently below (i.e., one grade point), that of White students regardless of their enrollment in accelerated/honors, college preparatory/regular, transition/basic or special education courses at OPRFHS, a catalyst for change becomes an imperative.

Research Hypotheses

The AAAST designed these six hypotheses to frame the theoretical research context in which to qualitatively investigate, through face-to-face interviews with African American students, factors related to explaining the learning community performance gap between the academic performance of African American students and that of their White student counterparts at OPRFHS:

1. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who find school (peers, teachers, staff, administration) to be both a safe and reinforcing environment both in sharing and in expressing feelings and intellect.
2. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who experience in the home high academic achievement as a highly valued standard of performance and as a very high priority for investment of family resources on the part of parents (or parent surrogates).
3. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify with and who do associate with peers who value and invest in such achievement.
4. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and who do utilize academic support services at the school and in the school community.

5. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who experience strongly supportive interactions with key classroom teachers and dean counselors.
6. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary. The triple quandary consists of the following theoretical constructs:
 - a) The Mainstream [White] Culture;
 - b) The Minority Experience;
 - c) The Black Cultural Experience.

African American students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary are more likely to:

- Develop peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class and gender boundaries;
- Participate in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities;
- Develop coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies between mainstream [White] values and their home and community values;
- Internalize only those mainstream [White] values that they define as necessary for their academic achievement.

Major Findings

This executive summary presents the major findings of the AAST investigation which are detailed in the final report. Because the AAST used quantitative and qualitative methods to research and to gain understanding of the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS, depth and breadth aptly inform these findings.

Quantitative Findings

- African American students who enroll in college preparatory/regular (non-honors) courses and in special education programs experience a learning community performance gap in which they are less likely to receive a grade of excellent or above average (A or B). These students are placed “at risk” for academic success. They achieve lower grades in the college preparatory/regular (non-honors) and in special education courses when their performance is compared to their White counterparts who appear to have been “placed at promise” for academic success.
- The learning community performance gap is related to the reading and mathematics performance gap. On the pre-ACT PLAN and the PSAE ACT, African American students scored lower than their White student counterparts. These differences are statistically significant (see appendices C, D and E). Moreover, these reading and mathematics scores are statistically significant when correlated with weighted GPA.
- A comparative analysis of White and Black graduates who took twelve or more honors courses (“true” honors students) and had scores on the ISAT that highly meet and exceed reading performance standards on the ISAT showed that White students have a higher honors success rate (A or B grade). Correlations between reading scores and the ISAT were statistically significant for Black students but were not statistically significant for White students.

- The cumulative weighted GPAs of White male and female graduates increased throughout their four years at the high school while African American male and female graduates showed virtually no growth in cumulative weighted GPAs at graduation compared to their first semester weighted GPAs.
- White female and male students actively enrolled in the high school show increases in the cumulative weighted GPAs since their first semester while African American female and male students actively enrolled at the high school show no difference in cumulative weighted GPAs since their first semester.
- The cumulative weighted GPAs of African American students is more correlated with their ACT composite scores and their SAT combined scores than is the cumulative weighted GPAs of their White student counterparts.
- African American students from Oak Park Elementary District 97 have an OPRFHS mean weighted GPA of 2.31, whereas White students from District 97 have a mean weighted GPA of 3.29. This constitutes almost a one-point gap. A gap also exists for African American and White students from River Forest Elementary District 90 where African American students' mean weighted GPA at OPRFHS is 2.80 compared to White students' mean weighted GPA of 3.53.
- More than three years of disciplinary data show virtually no change in the pattern and the frequency of disciplinary infractions of African American and White male and female students.

Qualitative Findings

- Both qualitative and quantitative results show that African American students in the AAST sample who endorse internalization on the Black Racial Identity and Attitude Scale (BRIAS) have higher weighted GPAs. African American students in the AAST sample do not have attitudes that identify with either African American or White culture experiences. They do not reject White cultural norms; instead, they negotiate mainstream, minority and African American culture experiences within the social ecology and everyday construction of the school. This important finding suggests that African American student achievement is associated with internalization which is embedded in the sixth hypothesis of the study. The greater the endorsement of internalization on the BRIAS, the more students negotiate mainstream [White], minority and African American culture experiences in the school without compromising or diminishing the culture of other groups at the school. However, students who endorse internalization continue to experience a learning community performance gap at OPRFHS.
- Qualitative data from students' videotaped interviews reveal two internalized streams--one negotiated and the other non-negotiated. African American students in the internalized negotiated success stream have higher weighted GPAs than students in the internalized non-negotiated stream. Students in the internalized non-negotiated stream have both discipline infractions and lower weighted GPAs. Furthermore, these students tend to "act out" their African American identity in dress, demeanor and speech; thus, they call attention to themselves in classroom and hallway situations with OPRFHS faculty and staff. In so doing, their behavior is often found to be disruptive and defiant of authority.

- Results from videotaped interviews show that African American students in the sample who are able to manage, cope and negotiate the triple quandary are academically successful. They are conscious of the images and the subtle messages of their group, and they develop strategies from their family and community to successfully negotiate both a mainstream [White] and a minority experience in the learning community at OPRFHS. When not successfully negotiated, these two experiences can limit the academic achievement of African American students in the learning community at OPRFHS.
- Results from videotaped interviews and from the Ed-Excel Assessment of Secondary School Culture show that African American students are less likely to feel safe and happy about school and classroom environments. These results confirm the perception that African American and White students experience different levels of safety in the school climate. Moreover, African American students are less likely to feel happy about their teachers.
- There is a systemic learning community performance gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School. The learning community performance gap suggests that two communities exist at the high school--one for White students that places them "at academic promise" and one for African American students that places them "at academic risk." The learning community performance gap is further exacerbated by differential outcomes in the success rates for African American and White students in accelerated/honors courses.

Recommendations

1. Institutional investment in resources to implement evidence-based research on all existing and all future programs, interventions and reforms that are intended to enhance the achievement of all students at OPRFHS.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and Director of Operations
2. Institutional investment in the 2002-2003 evidence-based staff development action research learning teams. The teams and their focuses include:
The Tripod Project -The focus of this team is to develop strong and positive relationships between students and teachers that enhance opportunities for each student's academic achievement;
The OPRFHS Talent Development Model - The focus of this team is to develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based strategies that are integrated with the subject-matter content, include materials which produce enhanced task engagement, acknowledge and build on student's individual assets, connect to students' cultural and lived experiences and are used in demanding, well-managed and supportive social contexts of high expectations;
Reading Across the Curriculum - The focus of this team is to increase student academic success through the learning and application of literacy strategies in all courses;
Partnerships with Parents - The focus of this team is to develop effective partnerships with all parents, especially parents of African American students, to improve student academic success and close the learning community performance gap;
Discipline without Alienation - The focus of this team is to assist teachers in finding ways to help students improve their classroom behavior and their cooperation levels without alienating students; and
Successful Transitioning to High School - The focus of this team is to improve the transition experience of all incoming freshman with special attention to groups that are most typically placed at risk of failure.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction and Director of Instruction
3. Institutional investment in resources to promote evidence-based research--assessment, evaluation, change and redesign--of all reading improvement programs including Elements of Reading, English 3-4 with Reading Connections, American Literature 1-2 with Reading Connections, Reading Strategies, Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) and all other reading support programs.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and English Division Head
4. Institutional investment in resources to promote evidence-based research--assessment, evaluation, change and redesign--of all basic level mathematics programs including Foundations of Algebra, Integrated Geometry and Algebra, Intermediate Algebra and Applied Mathematics.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Mathematics Division Head
5. Institutional investment in resources to put in place evidence-based systems and processes to maximize the success of all students on the ACT test as predicted by their performance on the PLAN test and to maximize the success of all students on the PLAN test as predicted by their performance on the EXPLORE test.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction and Division Heads

6. Institutional investment in resources to examine and revise (as necessary) the grading philosophy at OPRFHS with a strategic effort to understand the Black and White differences in grade distribution in all courses and levels with particular attention to the honors level.

Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Division Heads

7. Institutional investment in resources to enable the disciplinary system to investigate ways to determine its effectiveness in reducing student infractions of the OPRFHS *Code of Conduct*. This requires a commitment by the disciplinary system to change and implement effective short and long-term intervention and prevention strategies to reduce student disciplinary infractions. This commitment to change must include the following:

- a) The establishment of short and long-term research-based intervention and prevention strategies to reduce African American female and male disciplinary infractions;
- b) The establishment of research-based short and long-term intervention and prevention strategies to reduce African American female and male recidivism rates;
- c) The establishment of evaluation procedures and methods to measure the effectiveness of all short and long-term preventions and interventions;
- d) The investigation of ways to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Discipline Without Alienation Learning Team.

Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services and Deans of Discipline

8. Institutional investment in resources to conduct evidence-based research on all attendance system interventions intended to enhance the academic achievement of all students.

Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Operations, Attendance Coordinator and Dean Counselors

9. Institutional investment in resources to investigate ways to enhance positive interpersonal relationships between faculty and students. In order to accomplish this, evidence-based efforts should also be made to determine the best student-to-educator ratio to ensure positive and substantive interpersonal relationships and communication in all courses and caseloads.

Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Division Heads

10. Institutional investment in resources to create a seamless transition from all sender schools (including Districts 90 and 97) by designing a longitudinal research study to track and measure student progress in grade levels six, seven, eight, nine and ten.

Responsible school agents: Boards of Education, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum & Instruction

11. Institutional investment in resources to support continued evidence-based research and to create a local advisory board of parents, teachers, staff, administration and board members from Districts 90, 97 and 200 to collaborate and monitor the academic success of all students.

Responsible school agents: Boards of Education and Superintendents

12. Institutional investment of resources to support the creation and implementation of parent development interventions and workshops to maximize the success of all students with particular focus on African American students.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Instruction and Leaders of Parent Organizations
13. Institutional investment of resources to initiate and foster organizations for African American student academic success, development, networking and mentoring.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services and Activities Director
14. Institutional investment of resources and support for the African American Faculty Advisory Council to monitor, evaluate and assess implementation of programs established to impact the achievement of African American students while affirming the collective responsibility of all faculty for the achievement of African American students.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and African American Faculty
15. Institutional investment of permanent operating and hard-line budget resources to reduce the learning community performance gap. These permanent resources will be matched by outside grant resources to reduce the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. To achieve outside matching grant resources, a consultant with grant writing skills is required.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and Chief Financial Officer
16. Continued philosophical and institutional commitment from the Board of Education and administration in implementing solutions to reduce the learning community performance gap and to create an environment of opportunity for all students as part of its mission to “provide all students a superior education so that they achieve their full human potential.” As part of this commitment, all policy, practices and procedures (e.g., tracking in basic, regular and honors courses; course registration deviations; and weighted GPA) need to be reviewed to determine the impact they have on the learning community performance gap.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education and Superintendent/Principal
17. Institutional investment of resources and support to continue to implement and investigate the effectiveness of intervention programs like Clustering, Project SCHOLAR, Learning Seminar, Learning Support, etc. as meaningful attempts to eliminate all gaps in learning performance.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education and Superintendent/Principal

INTRODUCTION

The achievement gap which exists between the performance of White students and that of African American¹ students at Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) is multidimensional, complicated and complex. A single cause or a single cluster of relevant data, facts and evidence is insufficient as either descriptor or explanation. Multiple causes, dimensions, associations and relations among a series of known facts, perceptions, hypotheses and lived experiences are more accurate and pertinent in explaining the gap. Though there are many relevant concepts to convey what might be meant by the “the gap,” none seem more compelling and robust in capturing this multidimensional, complicated and complex issue than the title we have chosen for this report, **The Learning Community Performance Gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School**. We, the members of the OPRFHS African American Achievement Study Team (AAAST), have spent more than two years seriously challenging ourselves to raise questions about and to seek answers to this nagging and disturbing inequity in our school—the achievement gap which exists between the performance of Black students and that of White students at OPRFHS.

We have asked ourselves sets of questions about individual behaviors and types of peer group interactions, about parental involvement, and about issues in home environment. We have also probed the subsystems within the school—school climate, the classroom and curriculum, academic support, dean counselor support, discipline, attendance and extracurricular activities—that have either supported or impeded the achievement of African American students. The depth and breadth of our inquiry have led us to believe that all students come from multidimensional, complicated and complex individual, peer, parent, home and school environments. These environments interact and shape both the functioning and the role of the learning community at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

Oak Park and River Forest High School seeks to educate all children. When the mean performance of African American students is consistently below (i.e., approximately one grade point) that of White students whether these students are enrolled in honors, regular, basic or special education courses at OPRFHS, a catalyst for change becomes imperative. Although there is no single explanation for the existence of the gap, there are critical aspects that substantiate it as a learning community performance gap.

Schools ought to be able and willing to make adjustments, to create interventions and to introduce preventions within a number of subsystems in order to improve the performance of all students. When a

¹ Throughout this report, racial designations of African American and Black are used interchangeably in references to students who were the subject of this research study.

pattern remains evident and a gap remains consistent in the academic achievement of any group of students at OPRFHS, the school must develop processes, strategies and programs to address the inequitable outcome, especially if OPRFHS valorizes its commitment that all children can learn. This commitment is implicit in the OPRFHS mission statement: “. . . to provide all students a superior education so that they may achieve their full human potential.” Because gaps in academic achievement of some students limit the potential and success of all students, the AAST believes that evidence-based research--the testing and ferreting out of variables, patterns, associations and clusters within school subsystems and among a selected sample of African American students--is one powerful and substantiated way to understand and to test the extent of our learning community performance.

The learning community performance gap either may have become a norm or may be accepted as a fact at OPRFHS. Indeed, the OPRFHS learning community performance gap has become an expectation and an expected outcome for many. When the gap is considered a norm, comments like “Black students just don’t do as well as White students” can become a typical response from some members of the faculty and staff. Because the gap can be predicted with regularity and has elicited minimal reaction and consequences at the end of each school year, important questions arise:

- Is the OPRFHS learning community performance gap either a norm or an expected outcome?
- Is the cause of the OPRFHS learning community performance gap likely attributed to individual motivation and to behavior?
- Is the academic achievement of all students in the OPRFHS learning community tied solely to the individual or to what the individual student brings cognitively and behaviorally to the school?
- Is the OPRFHS learning community performance a system of cultural and institutional support structures necessary for the promotion, motivation and encouragement of all students to learn?

The AAST believes that OPRFHS must embrace the multidimensional, complicated and complex lives of all students to ensure that all students can learn and can perform at equitable and equal levels of system support and opportunity. The AAST has developed this report to this end: to provide the opportunity for all to learn and to understand what is needed to initially reduce and to eventually eliminate the learning community performance gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

A Retrospective View of a Twenty-Five Year Journey: Past Initiatives and Programs

When we, the members of the African American Achievement Study Team, embarked upon our journey to understand and to find solutions to the achievement gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School, we respectfully placed importance on the reflective examination of the school's past efforts to address this intolerable and persistent inequity. As we probed data in our search for qualitative and quantitative findings, we also consulted available records and called upon available stakeholders for their recollections of both individual and collective efforts made and results realized. Even though these queries have often yielded differing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of past initiatives and programs, our advantage of hindsight has confirmed not only the consistency of the attention given to the school's achievement gap but also the ongoing tensions which have continuously emanated from frustrations about stalemated progress toward its elimination. Additionally, we have always understood that our intention to describe past attempts with accuracy and objectivity will automatically and rightly invite questions of integrity, of focus, of purpose, of structure, of operational viability, of management, of competing interests and of will.

Resurrecting articulated and unarticulated tensions associated with such questions and recounting instances and practices of not dealing squarely with issues of educational equity, educational access and academic success which affect the lives and the futures of students of one race and not of others become painful. We believe that tensions arising from diverse accounts, from diverse individual perspectives of past events and from the realities of either unplanned or poorly planned program evaluations must neither dominate our attention nor control our energies to act now. Therefore, we emphatically assert that our primary purpose in reviewing past initiatives is to situate this study in a quasi-historical setting so that it will be understood not only as an continuation of past efforts but more importantly as a promising and fertile resource which will inspire authentic, sustained and evidence-based initiatives that will effectively and permanently eliminate the school's achievement gap.

The school's and its communities' awareness of gaps in the academic achievement of racially identified groups of students is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it has spanned the past twenty-five years. An internal report which documented the achievement of African American students as related to their educational backgrounds was written as early as 1977. The next two decades witnessed the formation of several internally generated ad hoc committees and the subsequent publication of reports and recommendations. Notable among these were reports developed by committees which:

- Studied behavior management issues in 1990;
- Chronicled its investigation of African American achievement during an extensive two-year school-wide study which culminated in 1991;

- Addressed school safety and discipline issues and ultimately advanced numerous recommendations from its parent and faculty representatives in 1993-94;
- Constructed the district's strategic plan in 1994.

Lastly and very importantly, the Board of Education officially endorsed specific activities which supported the two goals of the newly created School Improvement Plan written and adopted in November 1999: the elimination of the African American achievement gap and the development of a positive school climate for all students. Produced by a committee of representatives from every constituency of the school and its communities, this plan effectively triggered defined initiatives while it also attracted substantial funding from competitive grant sources for the next three school years.

Interest, concern and pressure were concurrently being exerted by community and parent groups such as the Oak Park Chapter of the NAACP and A.P.P.L.E. (African American Parents for Purposeful Leadership in Education) during several of these years. The latter's continuing focus on issues, practices and conditions surrounding the achievement of African American students at the school has appropriately defined its various roles: that of advocate for African American parents and students; that of communicator with parents about the school's programs, policies and practices; that of critic of school programs, policies and practices; that of community activist seeking information and urging the participation of the African American public on key issues. A.P.P.L.E.'s fifteen-year relationship with the school can be characterized by its fluctuating experiences of satisfaction and dissatisfaction which have been based on the school's and A.P.P.L.E.'s sometimes similar and sometimes differing perceptions of barriers to academic achievement and of solutions to the gap. Nevertheless, disappointments and disagreements have neither discouraged A.P.P.L.E. nor the Board of Education and the school's staff from forging a productive and responsive partnership.

During the past fifteen years, the school has begun to accumulate data related to achievement by race; recently, the school has attempted to translate such accumulated data into action. The many calls to action articulated by the school's faculty, administrators and Board members echoed the concern and resolve for action enunciated by ad hoc committees in their reports as well as by parent and community organizations. Attempts to act assumed the forms of various types of interventions. Despite the assumed sincerity which underpinned their particular intentions or designs, many past interventions inherently suffered from the absence of some or all essential planning, implementation and evaluation components such as:

- They did not employ evidence-based research techniques;
- They lacked focus as a result of not being evidence-based;
- They lacked measurable goals;

- They lacked accurate and reliable means of measurement even when goals were identified; and/or
- They lacked plans for reflection and judgments of their effectiveness which could have produced directions for modifications, improvements and coordination with other interventions.

In summary, because interventions were not guided by evidence-based evaluation frameworks and methodologies, the collection and analysis of valid, reliable and meaningful data about the worthiness of any intervention's potential for eliminating the achievement gap were not feasible. Nevertheless, the determination to act generated the impetus to try a range of interventions.

Based on the popular and researched approach of direct instruction, "The Structured Studies Program" (SSP) was a four-year effort which was installed in the late 1980s for students who had previously failed at least two courses. Highly prescriptive instructional techniques governed the delivery of lessons in the core disciplines of English, mathematics and history; these strategies were also incorporated in the support subject areas of reading, geography and spelling. The program also included a daily study skills component which served as an ongoing mentoring opportunity. For a variety of reasons, the program was discontinued in the early 1990s.

Well-intentioned efforts to move toward systemic change by establishing a school-within-a-school model for freshmen resulted in the "Four For One Hundred Program" from 1996 through 1998. Although this was a sincere attempt to attend to the academic and social needs of the regular/college-preparatory student (often referred to as "the student in the middle"), the identification and enrollment process for one hundred freshmen proved to be too narrow. For example, logistical barriers did not allow students to enroll in even one honors course if they were enrolled in this program. Providing a sufficient number of these students with core courses which corresponded to their appropriate individual ability levels while maintaining their enrollment in the program became impossible. Additionally, other logistical challenges inherent in this type of program could not be overcome. Therefore, it was discontinued after just two school years.

During the 1990s, each of the school's divisions was charged with the task of finding ways to narrow identified gaps in achievement. One example was the English Division's plan to gradually eliminate all basic-level courses by preparing students to succeed with higher educational expectations in non-basic courses. Another was the History Division's restructuring of basic-level required courses as one-semester classes that were offered in a double period time slot with two teachers. Additionally, the English Division and the History Division developed specific courses which were expected to be of high interest to African American students: African American Literature, African American History and African History. Still another example was the Mathematics Division's expansion of their summer school "step-up" course opportunities by featuring financial incentives in the form of a tuition rebate for any student

who successfully transitioned to a higher course or sequence level. A final example was the collaboration of the English and Mathematics Divisions in the development of a summer school program for incoming African American freshmen—F.A.M.E. (Freshman Advancement in Math and English)—which ended after two years because its follow-up challenges throughout the school year could not be met.

Meanwhile, other changes emanated from the school's decisions regarding fiscal responsibility. Various stakeholders greeted them with a range of responses: hopeful support, reluctant acceptance, suspicious criticism, and cynical disappointment. Key among these was the reduction of the daily class schedule from 9 to 7 ½ periods in 1996. This one alteration engendered others: the elimination of double-period labs in science courses; the restructuring of the "A" period from a daily "homeroom" session to an "as needed" session; and the assignment of paraprofessionals to hallway and study hall supervisory responsibilities previously assumed by faculty.

In 1997, the focus of the school's efforts turned toward the development of small-scale instructional interventions which attempted to address the individual learning needs of all students after voters supported a referendum. Community members called for the dedication of some referendum funding to the improvement of programs and the addressing of the achievement gap. Thus, "The Academy" was born. This constellation of programs initially included three which were available either to all students in the school or to all students within a grade level: the academic tutoring program, the Education-to-Careers Program and the Freshman Seminar Program. Specific groups of cross-age students were initially targeted as enrollees in at least four other "Academy" programs: a resource program which provided academic support to students with demonstrated learning needs; a reading program for students with below grade level reading competencies; a Regular Education Initiative (REI) designed as a co-teaching approach for mainstreamed special education students and regular education students who were placed at risk for academic success in core subject classes; and a behavior goal-setting program which grew into the "Contract for Success Program" for identified students who would benefit from ongoing mentoring about appropriate conduct, attendance and achievement in designated subjects. Although detailed reports on all "Academy" programs were annually compiled and presented to the Board of Education for at least two school years, these provided no statistically reliable evidence of impacting the school's achievement gap. The "Academy" label was dropped at the end of the 1999-2000 school year when several aspects of individual programs were redesigned.

An equally significant change was the reconfiguration of the established and long-standing integrated counseling and discipline model. Developed in 1959 and implemented in 1960, the role of the counselor in the "Dean System" model encompassed the general responsibility for the educational well-being of students from post-secondary and college advising to all levels of discipline during the years a student attended high school. In practice, the "dean" (counselor) under this system served as an "educational

multi-specialist.” The philosophy of this holistic system was that the counselor, given an opportunity to develop an awareness and understanding of all academic and socio-emotional factors, issues and concerns that impact the student, would better be able to counsel and guide the student. Underlying this model was the importance of developing a relationship with the student and with persons significant to the student’s potential success. Within this system, discipline was viewed as an opportunity for counseling that centered on appropriate choices, problem solving, and decision-making, thus becoming a student learning experience. At the core of this system were prevention and intervention strategies which included communication and collaboration with faculty, staff, parents and students to meet the goal of changing negative student behavior patterns. In 1994, the selective interpretation of a faculty/community report on discipline in OPRFHS led to major changes in the structure and delivery of counseling and disciplinary services. In its final report, this discipline study team recommended institutional and systemic changes and called for added assurances that the discipline of students would be handled consistently and equitably in all cases. The report expressed great concern over the “lack of a database for evaluating the performance of the dean system in its counseling and disciplinary functions” (Report of the Discipline Study Team, p. 19).

Since 1996, the dean system described above has been divided into two separate delivery models: dean counselors and deans of discipline. Dean counselors continue to address minor student discipline issues while the deans of discipline handle more serious disciplinary infractions. Continuing debate has surrounded this change of delivery models, centering on issues similar to those related to the previous dean model and related to the fair, equitable and consistent treatment of students who unfortunately become involved in the school’s discipline system. Critical among these issues are the disproportionate number of African American students (particularly male) who are suspended or expelled and the obvious relationship between involvement in the discipline system and academic under-achievement among segments of the African American student population at OPRFHS.

Even though topics related to the achievement gap annually appeared on agendas for institute, inservice and staff development days for all faculty, other notable training programs were employed to address faculty and staff behaviors, attitudes and beliefs. All faculty members participated in the one-year program related to E.E.O. training (Equal Educational Opportunity) in the early 1980s. From the mid to the late 1980s, almost three-fourths of the faculty completed training in highly recognized T.E.S.A. techniques (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement). Many faculty members were also trained in the use of cooperative learning approaches during the 1980s while all completed the “World of Difference” training program in the 1990s. Additionally, G.E.S.A. training (Gender Expectations and Student Achievement) attracted modest faculty enrollment when it replaced its T.E.S.A. forerunner in the late 1990s. All faculty and staff participated in human relations training during the 1998-1999 school

year. Finally, nationally recognized scholars and experts in minority student achievement have worked with representative faculty groups and have offered their recommendations for improvement. However, the lack of availability of needed time, effort and finances to capitalize on these staff development training programs has contributed to the district's failure to narrow the achievement gap for its African American students.

Finally, African American students were enlisted in the search for solutions to the gap. Earlier studies of African American achievement led to the formation of BOSS (Black Organization for Student Support), a student-led initiative which focused on students' mentoring of peers. BOSS-EXCEL later became an offshoot of BOSS. Both organizations have attempted to embrace and to affirm the lived experiences of African American students through academic and social activities. Additionally, local minority student leadership conferences were consecutively held in June 2000 and June 2001. A nucleus of selected minority students also represented the school at the three annual student leadership conferences sponsored by the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN). Lastly, the NAACP-sponsored ACTSO (Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics) competitions have been in place locally for several years.

Oak Park and River Forest High School has been a member of the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) since this organization first convened in June 1999. The network offers all of its member districts invaluable opportunities for sharing key data related to factors which affect academic achievement as well as for marshalling resources to individually and collectively address the achievement gap. Through its membership, OPRFHS has participated in the network's commitment to examining and addressing all factors which contribute to the academic achievement gap which persists in the educational experiences of African American and Latino students in all fifteen school districts in this consortium. Underlying all MSAN activities are a daunting range of socioeconomic, racial, home, community as well as school structural and operational factors which member districts have not only acknowledged but also embraced as essential to the MSAN research agenda. During the past three years, MSAN has formally constituted itself and garnered funding from nationally recognized foundations. OPRFHS participated with network schools in an extensive survey of student attitudes, which has produced data that has been disaggregated by grade level, race and gender (see "Minority Student Achievement Network" on pp.19-20). Furthermore, OPRFHS has participated in other MSAN initiatives such as conferences for students of color, for teachers and for network district stakeholders and decision-makers. OPRFHS is also actively involved in MSAN's research agenda by participating in its emerging adolescent literacy project and its established Tripod Project (see "Institutionalizing Systemic Staff Development" on p. 85).

The twenty-five year journey of Oak Park and River Forest High School to resolve the academic achievement gap has consistently been marked with commitment despite the school's alternating

experiences with hope of resolving the gap and with frustration of its continuance. All members of the OPRFHS could choose to look upon those efforts which have been made as predictors of future failure. But the OPRFHS learning community and each of its stakeholders--whether they be students, faculty, parents, administrators, residents or community representatives--have chosen to re-affirm the common and uncompromised intention to eliminate the academic achievement gap from the lives of students in their high school. Although this report details the components, findings and recommendations of the African American Achievement Study Team (AAAST), it also reflects the power of the Oak Park and River Forest High School as a learning community whose members believe that the academic achievement of all students is an attainable goal by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Finally, the report itself testifies to the collective will of all members of the OPRFHS learning community to work collectively and tirelessly to realize its goal and to set in motion a new era of systemic change which will sustain each student's achievement and will reach well beyond the targeted date of 2006 to all subsequent years of the twenty-first century.

Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN)

One major impetus for membership of OPRFHS in the Minority Student Achievement Network is to draw on the richness of its collaborative efforts; another is to share best practices with network schools which are attempting to resolve the ongoing challenge of addressing and reducing the achievement gap. OPRFHS shares similar demographic characteristics with MSAN members such as the Ann Arbor, Chapel Hill, and Madison school districts (see table 1). Among this more limited group, each district's majority student population is White with African American being the largest student minority population.

Table 1. School Districts in the Minority Student Achievement Network, Data from 1997-1998²

District Name	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Other	Total
Amherst, Massachusetts K-12	70.3	10.2	8.3	10.7	.5	-	3566
Ann Arbor, Michigan K-12	70.3	16.9	2.2	10.0	.49	-	15875
Arlington, Virginia K-12	41.4	17.2	31.2	10.1	.1	-	17910
Berkeley, California K-12	25.9	41.6	14.1	7.3	-	9.6	9807
Cambridge, Massachusetts K-12	41.0	34.0	14.0	10.0	.5	-	7613
Chapel Hill, North Carolina K-12	70.4	16.9	3.7	7.2	.16	1.7	8536
Cleveland Heights, Ohio K-12	25.1	70.1	.86	.15	.13	2.3	7186
Evanston, Illinois K-12 *	44.0	45.0	8.0	3.0	0	0	6922
Madison, Wisconsin K-12	68.9	17.2	4.7	8.6	.6	-	25327
Oak Park, Illinois K-8	58.3	31.8	3.4	2.9	.2	3.5	5241
OPRFHS, Illinois 9-12	60.6	29.0	3.6	3.2	.1	3.7	2721
Shaker Heights, Ohio K-12	42.0	52.0	1.0	3.0	-	2.0	5610
White Plains, New York K-12	41.8	25.2	30.2	2.7	.1	-	6104

* Evanston, Illinois is made up of Evanston-Skokie Consolidated District 65 and Evanston Township High School District 202.

Like MSAN, OPRFHS is committed to an action research model that combines scholarly research approaches with school practitioner strategies, models and outcomes. The goals are to develop and to change current instructional practices that impede, limit or fail to identify the total range of assets among high, moderate and low achieving African American students at OPRFHS. Since the 2000-2001 school year, more than 34,000 students in MSAN districts completed the Ed-Excel Assessment of Secondary School Culture. OPRFHS, like other MSAN member districts, uses this survey to investigate those items on which Black and White students responded differently. Preliminary results from the 2000-2001 Ed-Excel Survey show the following differences in Black and White student responses at OPRFHS:

- Black students are less likely to feel safe and happy about the school and teachers;
- Black students are less likely to seek tutoring or extra academic help from teachers, tutors or older students during free periods or outside of school hours;
- Black students report that they have less exposure to “positive peer pressure;”
- Black students report 25-100 books in their homes, whereas White students report more than 250 books in their homes.

² Since the compilation of this data, the Montclair, New Jersey, school district has joined MSAN.

These preliminary results of the survey suggest that Black and White students at OPRFHS experience the high school in different ways. Because of these differences in Black student responses, it is critical for OPRFHS to understand the ways in which Black students experience both the culture and the academic climate of their high school.

The African American Achievement Study Team

OPRFHS assembled a collaborative local research team to conduct an extensive and intensive investigation of the actual and perceived barriers to African American achievement for two important reasons: to achieve district-wide goals related to achievement and school climate; to understand standards to measure educational equality, availability and use of educational resources and access to equal education. The African American Achievement Study Team (AAAST) originally consisted of seven members: two local academic researchers³, the retired Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, the Director of Instruction, the Division Head of the dean counselors (guidance) and a teacher of history and sociology. Upon the retirement of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (who remained active on the AAST after retirement), the Director of Instruction was appointed to her position. The new Director of Instruction, a former OPRFHS history teacher, subsequently joined the AAST.

³ One local researcher is an Associate Professor of Sociology at DePaul University. The other is an Independent Consultant for Statistical Analysis.

THE RESEARCH MODEL

The research team used an action research framework to guide its efforts to investigate the multidimensional, complicated and complex learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. In order to investigate the patterns, associations, trends and correlates of the gap, an action research framework was employed to investigate and interrogate all existing systems, programs, interventions and preventions, as well as the processes currently in place at the high school to impact and reduce the gap. Four theoretical and methodological models informed this framework. Each model was adopted by the AAST to frame its research design:

1. **Action Research** within which systems of improvement are developed, implemented, measured and evaluated for effectiveness in a timely manner to provide feedback and monitoring strategies to assess targeted goals. Programs created to address gaps in achievement are developed around specific goals and measurement techniques are identified to evaluate the attainment of those goals.
2. **The Talent Development Model** within which a talent development learning community is created to implement an integrity-based social ethos. The integrity-based social ethos takes into consideration the complexity, coherence and meaning contained in students' lived experiences. Student experiences are neither inherently nor predominantly deficit-ridden; furthermore, they are not characterized by deficiencies, inadequacies or pathologies, even when students come from marginalized social backgrounds. The talent development model seeks to over-determine student achievement and place students "at academic promise" rather than "at academic risk" (Boykin, "Talent Development Model");
3. **Evidence-Based Research** within which systems and processes are in place to prepare, plan, monitor, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of learning community programs and interventions intended to place students at academic promise, and;
4. **The Triple Quandary** within which an ecological and/or cultural theory is used to understand African American student achievement and the learning community performance gap (Boykin, "Triple Quandary").

This approach recognizes a set of distinct orders, patterns and meanings ascribed to a complexity of behaviors that undergird the bi-cultural status of African American students in most school settings. Because of their unique social position in the United States, African American students are bi-cultural:

“One ever feels his two-ness--an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (DuBois 17). In order to be successful within and outside their own culture and social climate, African American students at OPRFHS are hypothesized to confront a triple quandary within which they must negotiate three experiences:

- a) *The Mainstream [White] Experience* involves the conventional assumption of assimilation into the dominant culture. The end result is a melting pot in which cultural difference and diversity are integrated into a homogeneous environment with shared rules, goals and values. African Americans and members of other groups of color may perceive the melting pot as a forced conformity to a set of rules applied unevenly and typically to keep them behind.
- b) *The Minority Experience* consists of being exposed to a set of culturally, politically, socially and economically oppressive conditions that have reduced African American life chances. These conditions--such as African enslavement, anti-miscegenation laws, segregation, restrictive covenants, redlining, lynching, political disenfranchisement, racial profiling and racial balancing place African Americans in an out-group position in community, society and schools. This situation becomes a vicious cycle. African Americans are labeled inferior and are victimized by discrimination. The label of inferiority and the discriminatory treatment are subsequently used to blame African Americans for not trying hard enough. Failure is then attributed to their inferiority.
- c) *The Black Cultural Experience* relates to the complex ways in which African Americans develop certain coping strategies to negotiate the multiple contexts and situations they encounter in their everyday lived mainstream [White] experiences in the United States, where their culture’s centrality is either marginal or invisible. Some of these coping and negotiation strategies resemble efforts to “cross over” and negotiate mainstream [White] experiences by internalizing only those rules and cultural values that lead to success. As Boykin states, “some passive strategies that derive from mental colonization are connected to the mainstream (e.g., ‘a piece of the action’), and some active strategies are related to Black culture (e.g., identification with Black nationalist movements)” (The Triple Quandary and the Schooling of Afro-American Children 74).

Some coping strategies used by African American students may appear to be conforming or “passive”; these are usually perceived and understood as acceptable by mainstream [White] experiences. Other

strategies, such as identification with Black cultural experience, are usually labeled radical or militant in the context of the mainstream [White] experience because on appearance they are defined as abrasive; these are too often interpreted harshly and result in disciplinary action or expulsion. If African American students come from a bi-cultural experience within which they are hypothesized to negotiate a triple quandary, their academic achievement must be investigated from this broader social context. However, Black culture is too broad of an experience for the AAST to undertake in this report. Because the AAST recognizes the importance of Black culture and its relationship to academic achievement, we decided that racial identity, albeit a very narrow and watered down version of the Black cultural experience, be included in the study. Thus, we choose not to deal with the broadness and depth of the Black cultural experience but with a more limited measure of racial and ethnic identity. This choice was based on the finite resources of the AAST and the more specific focus of our research design. Ethnic/racial identity, rather than a broader understanding of cultural values as independent and at times reinforcing identity, more narrowly defines the AAST's definition of Black culture. Appendix A contains a theoretical overview of the Triple Quandary and related literature.

Six Hypotheses

The AAST designed these six hypotheses to frame the theoretical research context in which to investigate through face-to-face interviews with African American students factors related to explaining the learning community performance gap between African American students and their White student counterparts at OPRFHS:

1. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who find school (peers, teachers, staff and administration) to be both a safe and reinforcing environment both in sharing and in expressing feelings and intellect.
2. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who experience in the home high academic achievement as a highly valued standard of performance and as a very high priority for investment of family resources on the part of parents (or parent surrogates).
3. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify with and who do associate with peers who value and invest in such achievement.
4. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and who do utilize academic support services at the school and in the school community.

5. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who experience strongly supportive interactions with key classroom teachers and dean counselors.
6. The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary. The triple quandary consists of the following theoretical constructs:
 - a) The mainstream [White] culture;
 - b) The minority experience;
 - c) The Black cultural experience.

African American students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary are more likely to:

- Develop peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class, and gender boundaries;
- Participate in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities;
- Develop coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies between mainstream [White] values and their home and community values;
- Internalize only those mainstream [White] values that they define as necessary for their academic achievement.

While these six hypotheses may seem to be simple and intuitively obvious, the Ed-Excel data show that Black students experience the school in qualitatively different ways than their White student counterparts. The six hypotheses serve as subjective benchmarks to inform and to illuminate the anticipated differences and the complex ways that African American students experience and confront the everyday reality of both the high school's culture and its academic climate. The AAST believes that these six hypotheses provide an extensive and an intensive vehicle to comprehensively assess the multidimensional, complex and complicated ways African American students subjectively negotiate a set of experiences that place them either at academic risk or at academic promise at OPRFHS.

A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE GAP

The AAST attempted to identify and collect evidence that could be used to answer the following questions:

1. How extensive is the learning community performance gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School?
2. Is the OPRFHS learning community performance gap systemic? That is, is the gap present at every level in the OPRFHS learning community?

The data suggest clear answers to these questions: there is a learning community performance gap and it is systemic. The findings are startling, troubling and compelling. They not only show that the gap is systemic, but they also reveal that nuances of the gap at every grade level and in every ability level raise questions about grading standards and teacher expectations as well as about perceptions of expectations of White and Black students at OPRFHS. Our purpose in this section of the report is first to accurately describe and then to statistically analyze the persistent nature and the significance of the gap by comparing grade distributions for the total population of Black and White students at OPRFHS. The following pages will detail examinations of gaps in weighted grade point averages, in grade distributions, in reading and math performance and in college entrance examination scores. They will also analyze interrelationships among these variables. Where necessary, we divided students into subgroups to gain a fuller understanding of the nuances, complexities and systemic nature of the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS.

Understanding the Systemic Nature of the Learning Community Performance Gap

Grade distributions for Black and White students enrolled in the Classes of 2000, 2001 and 2002 at OPRFHS show that the White student weighted GPA and grade distributions are statistically significantly different from those of their Black student counterparts (see tables 2 and 3). Not only are White students in regular education and special education courses more likely to receive grades of A or B than are their Black student counterparts but these differences are also statistically significant.

Table 2. Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA by White and Black Students; Classes of 2000, 2001 and 2002 (p < .05)⁴

Race	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of the Mean
White	3.26	1296	.940810	.026134
Black	2.27	492	.829773	.037409
Total	2.98	1788	1.012164	.023937

Overall, the data presented in table 2 show that there is a one-point gap in the academic achievement of White and Black students at OPRFHS. On average, Black students' weighted GPA places them at academic risk in the learning community of OPRFHS while White students are placed at academic promise. This one-point difference in weighted GPA is extremely important and very significant for the future career options and life chances of African American students. The weighted GPA is a strong predictor of college admissions, especially in competitive colleges and universities where Black students are typically under-represented.

Table 3. Percent Grade Distribution for All Grade-Granting Courses by White and Black Students: Semester II, 2000-2001 (p < .0005)⁵

Grades	White	Black
A	39.5	16.8
B	36.4	29.5
C	16.7	29.0
D	5.7	17.0
F	1.7	7.7
Total	100.0	100.0

According to table 3, the modal grades in all grade-granting courses for White students are A (39.5%) and B (36.4%), while the modal grades in all grade-granting courses for Black students are B (29.5%) and C (29.0%). As the table shows, White students are more than twice as likely to receive a grade of A than Black students. Conversely, Black students are over four times as likely to receive a grade of F compared to White students. These differences are statistically significant (see appendix B).

In table 4, White special education students have a mean cumulative weighted GPA of 2.38. Their mean cumulative weighted GPA is statistically significantly different from that of Black special education students whose mean weighted GPA is 2.05.

⁴ Data in table 2 represent cumulative weighted GPA at the conclusion of semester two of the 1999-2000 school year (sophomores, juniors, and seniors).

⁵ All grade-granting courses include basic, regular and honors-level courses at OPRFHS.

Table 4. Mean Weighted Cumulative GPA for White and Black Special Education Students, 1999-2000 (Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors) ($p < .002$)

Race	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of the Mean
White	2.38	121	.735036	.066821
Black	2.05	90	.775337	.081728
Total	2.25	211	.768311	.052893

Black students in regular education and in special education experience a learning community performance gap in which they are less likely to receive a grade of above average (B) or excellent (A). These students appear to be placed at academic risk when compared to their White counterparts who appear to be placed at academic promise.

Honors Grade Distributions

When we compare grade distributions for Black and White students in honors courses, we not only find similar patterns of grade distribution disparity for Black and White students but we also discover the differences in these distributions to be statistically significant (see table 5).

Table 5. Percent Grade Distribution for Honors Courses by White and Black Students; Semester II, 2000-2001 ($p < .0005$)

Grades	White	Black
A	41.8	23.9
B	38.1	44.3
C	15.8	25.6
D	3.5	4.2
F	0.9	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0

The large differences in the distribution of the grades A and C for White and Black students are statistically significant and important.

In an attempt to identify factors that might affect such differences in grade distribution for honors students, the AAST first attempted to define “true” honors students and students who are “testing” to see if they can meet the rigorous academic challenge of honors courses. The AAST initially designated a “true” honors student as one who attempted five or more honors courses while in high school. Students who took one to four honors courses were designated as students “testing” to determine if they could meet the challenge of honors courses. The results from the use of this approach illustrate that a “true” honors student experienced a higher cumulative mean weighted GPA than the “testing” honors student who took one to four courses. The differences in the mean weighted GPA between Black and White students in both groups (“true” and “testing”) are statistically significant (see tables 6 and 7).

Table 6. Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA for One to Four Honors Courses by White and Black Students (Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors); 1999-2000 ($p < .0005$)

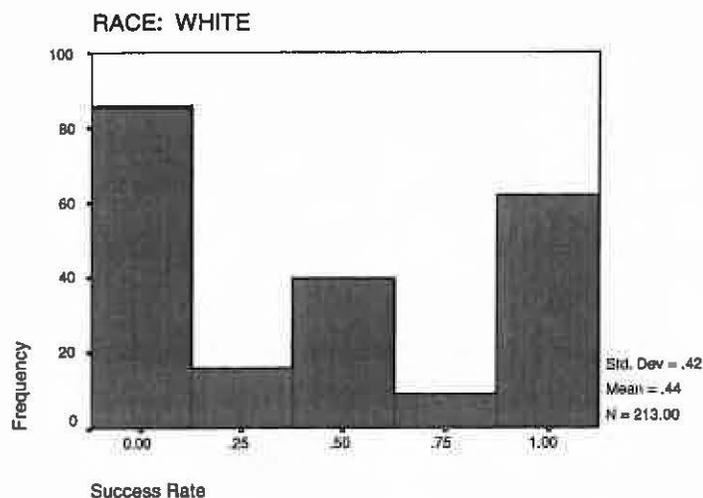
Race	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of the Mean
White	2.83	213	.660818	.045278
Black	2.49	68	.652113	.079080
Total	2.75	281	.673882	.040200

Table 7. Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA for Five or More Honors Courses by White and Black Students (Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors); 1999-2000 ($p < .0005$)

Race	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of the Mean
White	3.76	768	.683290	.024656
Black	3.24	77	.729570	.083142
Total	3.72	845	.703371	.024197

Because further analysis of these comparisons was necessary, the AAST next turned its attention to the success rate of these two types of students in their honors courses. The success rate is defined as the fraction of honors courses in which a student received a grade of A or B. The following four histograms show the distribution of success rates for these two groups of students by White and Black race.

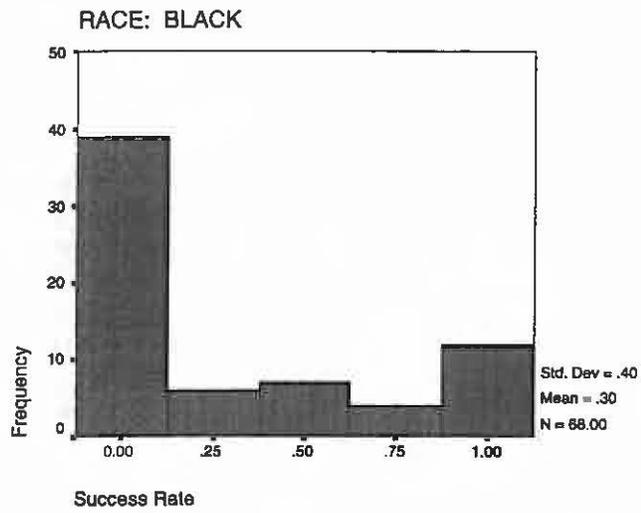
Histogram 1. Success Rate in Honors Courses Attempted (One to Four); White Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors; 1999-2000



STATISTICS

	N	Valid	Missing
	213		0
Mean		.4366	
Median		.5000	
Minimum		0	
Maximum		1.00	

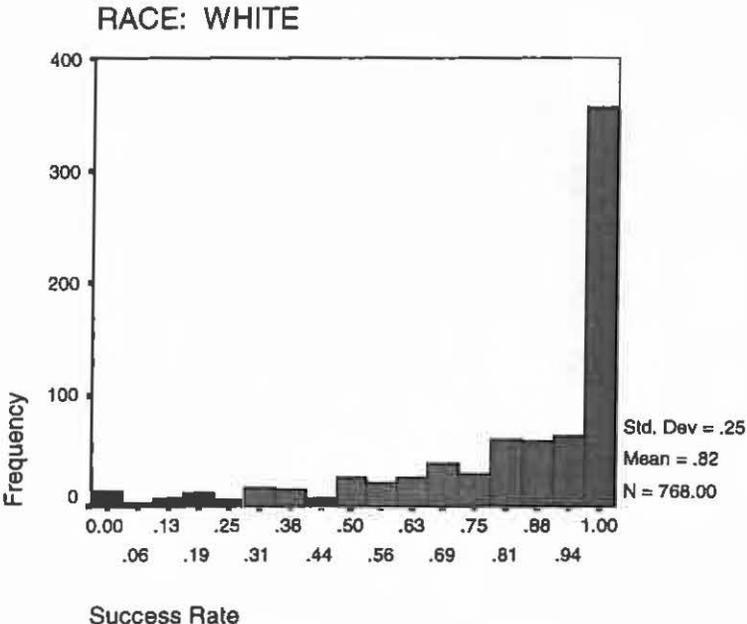
Histogram 2. Success Rate in Honors Courses Attempted (One to Four); Black Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors; 1999-2000



STATISTICS

N	Valid	68
	Missing	0
Mean	.2966	
Median	.9393	
Minimum	0	
Maximum	1.00	

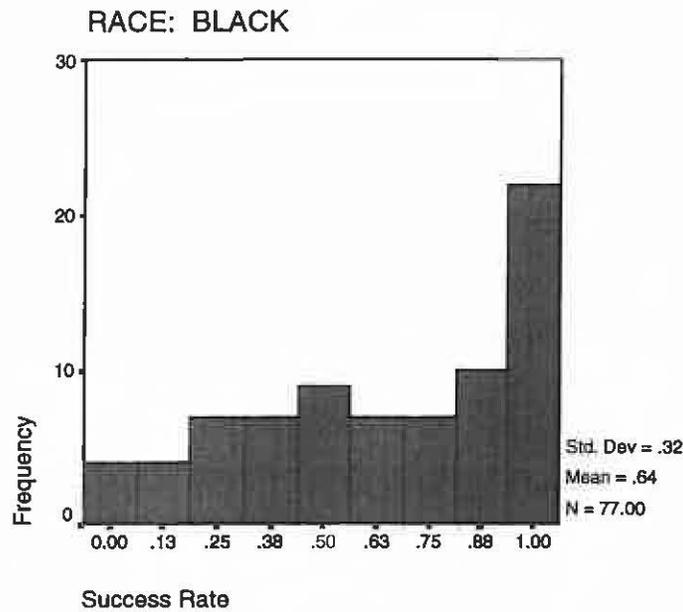
Histogram 3. Success Rate in Honors Courses Attempted (Five or More); White Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors; 1999-2000



STATISTICS

N	Valid	768
	Missing	0
Mean	.8193	
Median	.9393	
Minimum	0	
Maximum	1.00	

Histogram 4. Success Rate in Honors Courses Attempted (Five or More); Black Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors; 1999-2000



STATISTICS

N	Valid	77
	Missing	0
Mean		.6425
Median		.7143
Minimum		0
Maximum		1.00

Clearly, those students who took five or more honors courses, whether White or Black, experienced a significantly higher success rate than those who took one to four honors courses. More exposure to honors expectations appears to increase the opportunity for success in honors-level courses.

However, the bi-modality in the distribution of success rates for those in the one to four group (the “testing”) was troubling. While this bi-modal distribution was significantly more pronounced for White students, it was also apparent in Histogram 2 for Black students. Further analysis of this distribution led to an explanation. The students represented by Histograms 1 and 2 were sophomores, juniors and seniors. Most of the students with high (1.0) success rates in these two histograms were sophomores, students who would continue to enroll in honors courses for another two years and would move into the “Five or More” category, becoming “true” honors students. On the other hand, many of the students in the “One to Four” groups with the zero success rates were juniors and seniors, students who had unsuccessfully “tested” a low number of honors experiences and who had given up their pursuit of continued honors status.

It was clear that the AAST needed to narrow its focus and to more precisely differentiate between “true” honors students and the students “testing” the honors level. The AAST decided to focus on seniors only. The OPRFHS weighted grade system limits the positive effects of weighting for successful (grade of A or B) completion of honors courses to no more than twenty-four such experiences over a student’s four years in high school (see appendix H). Therefore, the AAST re-defined “true” honors-level seniors as those who had attempted twelve or more honors level courses during their high school experience. One hundred and sixty White and Black seniors in the Class of 2000 were identified as having met this criterion. Due to our previous recognition of the disproportionately low distribution of Black students in honors courses, the AAST was not surprised to discover that 154 White seniors attempted twelve or more honors courses while only six Black seniors attempted twelve or more honors courses.

For these 160 students, correlations between weighted GPA and reading and math scores on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) were computed by race. These students had taken the ISAT as sophomores in the spring of 1998. Tables 8 and 9 show these correlations.

Table 8. Correlation Between Weighted GPA and 1998 ISAT Reading and Math Scores for White Seniors Taking Twelve or More Honors Courses; Class of 2000

WHITE		Weighted GPA	ISAT Reading SS	ISAT Math SS
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1	.147	.335**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.073	.000
	N	154	149	151
ISAT Reading SS	Pearson Correlation	.147	1	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.073		.000
	N	149	149	146
ISAT Math SS	Pearson Correlation	.335**	.364**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	151	146	151

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9. Correlation Between Weighted GPA and 1998 ISAT Reading and Math Scores for Black Seniors Taking Twelve or More Honors Courses; Class of 2000

BLACK		Weighted GPA	ISAT Reading SS	ISAT Math SS
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1	.831*	.643
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.041	.168
	N	6	6	6
ISAT Reading SS	Pearson Correlation	.831*	1	.904*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041		.013
	N	6	6	6
ISAT Math SS	Pearson Correlation	.643	.904*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.168	.013	
	N	6	6	6

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The remarkably high correlation between the weighted GPA and the ISAT reading score for the six Black students in this category (.831) was worthy of further study. Such a correlation did not exist for comparable White students (.147). The AAST expected reading skill to be a major criterion for performing well in honors-level courses. Whereas this appeared to be the case for Black students, it did not exist for White students in the group taking a high number of honors-level courses at the high school. Further analysis of the low correlation between White student GPA and ISAT reading performance became imperative. Therefore, the AAST next looked at the ISAT reading levels for the students in both groups. A level of "Meets State Standards" (Meets) was assigned to any student whose reading scale score was in the 150 to 174 range. The level of "Exceeds State Standards" (Exceeds) was given to students whose scores fell into the 175 to 200 (maximum score) range. Tables 10 and 11 show the ISAT reading level distribution, by race, for the seniors who had attempted twelve or more honors courses.

Table 10. ISAT Reading Distribution for White Seniors Who Attempted Twelve or More Honors Courses; Class of 2000; ISAT Scores 1998

WHITE		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Exceeds	62	40.3	41.6	41.6
	Meets	85	55.2	57.0	98.7
	Below	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	149	96.8	100.0	
Missing		5	3.2		
Total		154	100.0		

Table 11. ISAT Reading Distribution for Black Seniors Who Attempted Twelve or More Honors Courses; Class of 2000; ISAT Scores, 1998

BLACK		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Exceeds	3	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Meet	3	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

The AAST hypothesized that the high Black correlation between weighted GPA and ISAT reading score was related to very high “Meets” scores for the three Black students in that category. Furthermore, the AAST conjectured that the distribution of White scores in the “Meets” category was far more diverse, leading to less of a correlation. In order to test these hypotheses, distributions of actual ISAT reading scale scores were examined. Tables 12 and 13 show these distributions.

Table 12. White Seniors Who Took Twelve or More Honors Courses and Whose 1998 ISAT Reading Levels Were Meets or Exceeds; Class of 2000

WHITE Scale Score	ISAT Reading Performance	
	Exceeds	Meets
153		1
155		1
157		3
160		4
161		2
163		7
165		7
167		14
169		6
170		10
171		11
172		11
174		8
175	9	
177	7	
179	11	
181	9	
185	9	
186	5	
193	4	
195	4	
200	4	
TOTAL	62	85

Table 13. Black Seniors Who Took Twelve or More Honors Courses and Whose 1998 ISAT Reading Levels were Meets or Exceeds; Class of 2000

BLACK Scale Score	ISAT Reading Performance	
	Exceeds	Meets
171		1
174		2
175	1	
181	1	
185	1	
TOTAL	3	3

Table 13 shows that the six Black students who fell into this narrowly defined category all had ISAT reading scale scores of 171 to 185. Thus, these students were either in the high “Meets” or in the “Exceeds” reading performance categories on the ISAT. In order to compare these students to a comparable group of White students, seventy-five White students whose ISAT reading scale scores were in the 171 to 185 range were identified. Correlations between weighted GPA and ISAT reading and math scale scores were computed (see tables 14 and 15).

Table 14. Correlation Between Weighted GPA and 1998 ISAT Reading and Math Scores; White Seniors, Twelve or More Honors Attempts; ISAT Reading Score 171 to 185; Class of 2000

WHITE		Weighted GPA	ISAT Reading SS	ISAT Math SS
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.128	.255*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.273	.029
	N	75	75	74
ISAT Reading SS	Pearson Correlation	.128	1.000	.265
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.273		.022
	N	75	75	74
ISAT Math SS	Pearson Correlation	.255*	.265	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029	.022	
	N	74	74	74

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 15. Correlation Between Weighted GPA and 1998 ISAT Reading and Math Scores; Black Seniors, Twelve or More Honors Attempts; ISAT Reading Score 171 to 185; Class of 2000

BLACK		Weighted GPA	ISAT Reading SS	ISAT Math SS
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.831*	.643
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.041	.168
	N	6	6	6
ISAT Reading SS	Pearson Correlation	.831*	1.000	.904*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041		.013
	N	6	6	6
ISAT Math SS	Pearson Correlation	.643	.904*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.168	.013	
	N	6	6	6

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 15 once again shows the incredibly high correlation between mean weighted GPA and ISAT reading scale score (.831) for Black students. Table 14 does not show a significant correlation for the comparable White students (.128). Similarly, the correlation between mean weighted GPA and ISAT math scale scores for Black students in this group (.643) is significantly higher than that for White students (.255) in the comparable group.

Table 16 shows the differences in mean cumulative weighted GPA for White and Black students in these two groups. The mean for the White student weighted GPA is 4.00. For the comparable Black students, it is 3.36. This difference is statistically significant.

Table 16. Comparison of Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA for White and Black Seniors, 1999-2000; Twelve or More Honors Attempts; 1998 ISAT Reading Scale Scores from 171 to 185; Class of 2000 (p<.01)

Ethnicity	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
White	4.00111	75	.529741	.061169
Black	3.36033	6	.952567	.388884
Total	3.95364	81	.587200	.065244

Furthermore, table 17 shows that the level of success rate in honors courses for the White students in this category (.8922) is higher than that of the comparable Black students (.6329). Again, this difference is statistically significant.

Table 17. Comparison of Mean Success Rate in Honors Courses for White and Black Seniors, 1999-2000; Twelve or More Honors Attempts; 1998 ISAT Reading Scale Scores from 171 to 185; Class of 2000 (p<.01)

Ethnicity	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
White	.8922	75	.168678	.01949
Black	.6329	6	.33405	.13637
Total	.8730	81	.19491	.02166

While this group was quite narrowly defined (seniors in 1999-2000 who attempted twelve or more honors courses and whose 1998 ISAT reading scale scores were 171 to 185), the differences in performance levels by race raised many questions. Why were the correlations between standardized test scores and academic performance so high for “true” Black honors-level students and not for the comparable White students? Why were the “true” Black honors-level students not performing at the same high academic level as their White counterparts even when their standardized reading test scores were comparable? What in the definition and understanding of the OPRFHS grading system enables White students to be more academically successful than comparable Black students even when reading skill level appears to be the same?

These findings underscore the need to understand and to investigate the standards by which Black and White students in honors courses are assessed. Our theory and hypotheses assert that Black students negotiate a triple quandary of mainstream [White] experience, minority experience and their Black cultural experience. We assume that Black students must be able to negotiate ways to neutralize the impact of their minority experience and their Black cultural experience on their honors course performance in order for them to succeed in honors courses. In order to succeed, they may need to identify with only those mainstream [White] experiences that may be more present in honors courses. The AAST further assumes that Black students in honors courses, especially those who have taken twelve or more honors courses, have acquired insights about honors standards and have demonstrated their knowledge of mainstream [White] values in both the curriculum and the culture of honors courses. Our hypothesis is that Black students who internalize only those mainstream [White] values necessary for academic achievement will succeed. The results clearly suggest that Black students do succeed but not at the level of their White student counterparts. Moreover, when they earn a high “Meets” or “Exceeds” level on reading performance standards on the ISAT, they do not have an honors-level success rate comparable to their White student counterparts who have attained similar reading performance levels. Still other questions surface. What in honors courses blocks or impedes the academic achievement of Black students? Does race or skin color serve to permanently restrict a student’s success in honors

courses? Clearly, Black students who take honors courses twelve or more times can change neither their race nor their skin tone.

There is a perception in segments of the learning community that students in the honors-level courses should be rewarded with higher grades not only on the basis of their level of performance but also on the basis of their willingness to accept a greater academic challenge by enrolling in such courses. These findings beg the question as to whether there is some level of privilege or entitlement in the distribution of grades at the honors level that favors higher success rates for White students regardless of their true academic ability, and in this case, of reading performance levels on the ISAT.

There have been instances in which teachers have been subjected to parental criticism (most often from White parents) for giving fewer grades of A and B in an honors-level class than is typical for such a class. These more demanding honors level teachers have often been labeled as “bad” teachers by both the students enrolled in their classes and by some of their parents. Undoubtedly, the percentage of A and B grades given in the honors level at OPRFHS has been steadily rising for many years. To shed light on this perception, the AAST recommends that the high school conduct a study to determine whether the expectations of honors-level students and their parents have led to situations of grade inflation in these courses.

Further complicating this situation is the system within which grades of A and B in honors courses are weighted, thus giving the majority (White) population in the school (as enrolled in these courses) an advantage for college admissions. Not only is the Black student population under-represented in such classes, but those who stretch themselves to move into this level do not receive the reward of grade weighting if they earn less than a B as a result of their efforts to try a more challenging academic environment. And, because grades lower than B are relatively unusual in honors courses, students who receive such grades are often encouraged to move down to the “more appropriate” regular level. Additionally, students themselves who receive the “unusual” grade of a C in an honors course sometimes see themselves as failures and voluntarily move down a level.

Situations of this type strongly suggest the need for an examination of the philosophy of grading and of grading practices in the honors level. Moreover, the lack of clarity and consistency in the grading of basic-level students further calls for the need for a study of grading philosophies and practices at OPRFHS. Some teachers believe that the academic performance of students in basic courses should be compared to each student’s ability, skill level and work ethic. Thus, students who work above their apparent academic potential receive grades of A and B while those working below their apparent academic potential receive grades of D and F. In basic courses taught by teachers who espouse this grading philosophy, the distribution of grades will often be similar to that of regular-level courses. However, other teachers believe that grades in basic courses should automatically be lower due to the

reduced academic demands and the lowered expectations in these courses compared to those in the regular level. These teachers further believe that students who are capable of earning an A or B in a basic course probably do not belong in the basic level. As a result, they often make the attainment of an A or B in basic courses virtually impossible, and they often attempt to move those few who can earn such grades into the regular level, thus diminishing the likelihood of the students to earn grades of A or B. As a result, the distribution of grades in the basic courses of such teachers is frequently skewed, sometimes quite heavily, toward the D grade. With a high percentage of Black students enrolled in basic-level classes, this philosophy of grading greatly contributes to the learning community performance gap at the high school.

While a Board-approved policy on grading exists at OPRFHS, interpretation and implementation of this policy by the many teachers who assign grades are in need of study. It appears that teachers use a variety of procedures for the determination of grades, at times in different sections of the same course taught by different teachers. Such practices give rise to several questions. Do grades represent the attainment of course standards? Are those standards adjusted appropriately according to the identified ability and potential of the students in a given level? If so, is the grade of A truly accessible to students at all levels? If standards in a given level reflect the measured ability and academic potential of students enrolled in that level, is it appropriate to weight the programs of properly placed students enrolled in the honors level? The AAST recommends the interrogation and evaluation of the standards and procedures used to assign grades in all levels, but particularly in the honors and basic levels. The entire learning community must come to a common understanding of the meaning of grades and the basis upon which they are awarded if the startling and compelling differences in the distribution of grades for White and Black students are to be eliminated.

The Reading and Mathematics Performance Gaps

Proficiency in reading and mathematics comprehension is critical for academic success. The overall learning community performance gap is related to gaps in reading and mathematics comprehension. In every grade level tested and for all reading and mathematics subtests of the PLAN and the Prairie State ACT, Black students score lower than their White student counterparts. The differences are statistically significant (see appendices C, D and E). Moreover, the correlation of reading and math scores with weighted GPA are significant at the .01 level. These data confirm that proficiency in reading and mathematics comprehension is critical to the academic success of OPRFHS students. However, racial gaps in both reading performance and mathematics performance are systemic in the OPRFHS learning community. The documented reality that Black students are much more likely to score lower than White students on standardized tests in reading and mathematics provides the learning community with a

mandate. All current reading and mathematics intervention programs must be evaluated for effectiveness in remediating students with deficient skills in these areas. Evidence-based intervention programs in both reading and mathematics which incrementally narrow and ultimately eliminate performance gaps in these areas must be developed, implemented and monitored as soon as possible.

First Semester Grade 9 Weighted GPA Correlated With Cumulative Growth for the Class of 2001

When the AAST investigated first semester weighted GPA to determine its correlation with cumulative weighted GPA at graduation, we again found startling results. Table 18 shows that White male and female students' mean cumulative weighted GPAs increased throughout their four years at OPRFHS by approximately .4 and .3 grade points, respectively, compared to first semester mean weighted GPAs; the differences in means are statistically significant. The correlations between first semester mean weighted GPAs for White female and male students are statistically significant.

Table 18. First Semester Grade 9 Mean Weighted GPA and Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA at Graduation for White Students by Female and Male; Class of 2001 (p < .05)

Semester	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Correlation
First Semester	Female	3.35	197	.712623	.050772	
Cumulative	Female	3.75	197	.768177	.054730	.829
First Semester	Male	2.97	185	.761395	.055979	
Cumulative	Male	3.23	185	.878744	.064607	.857

Results for Black male and female mean cumulative weighted GPAs at graduation compared to their first semester Grade 9 mean weighted GPAs show virtually no growth (see table 19). The AAST defined growth as improvement in the GPAs compared to the first semester of Grade 9. The correlation between first semester mean weighted GPAs and mean cumulative weighted GPAs at graduation for Black males and females is statistically significant. This means that the first semester mean weighted GPAs for Black females and males appears to be a strong predictor of their mean cumulative weighted GPAs at graduation. This finding is not true for White females and males (see table 18) whose mean weighted GPAs at the end of first semester Grade 9 increases throughout their four years at OPRFHS.

Table 19. First Semester Grade 9 Mean Weighted GPA and Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA at Graduation for Black Students by Female and Male; Class of 2001 ($p < .05$)

Semester	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Correlation
First Semester	Female	2.52	70	.746580	.089233	
Cumulative	Female	2.52	70	.746580	.089233	.731
First Semester	Male	2.18	73	.818748	.095827	
Cumulative	Male	2.18	73	.774575	.090657	.783

Results for White female and male students who are still actively enrolled in the high school show increases in the mean cumulative weighted GPAs since their first semester of Grade 9. The differences in means and the correlation between first semester of Grade 9 and the most current semester are statistically significant (see table 20).

Table 20. First Semester Grade 9 Mean Weighted GPA and Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA for Currently Enrolled White Students by Female and Male; Classes of 2002 and 2003 ($p < .05$)

Semester	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Correlation
First Semester	Female	3.29	419	.757211	.036992	
Cumulative	Female	3.57	419	.871549	.042578	.885
First Semester	Male	2.78	457	.845664	.039559	
Cumulative	Male	2.99	457	.926136	.043323	.857

Results for Black female and male students still actively enrolled in the high school show virtually no differences in mean cumulative weighted GPA compared to their mean weighted GPAs for their first semester of Grade 9. The correlation between the first semester's Grade 9 mean weighted GPAs and the most current mean cumulative weighted GPA are statistically significant (see table 21).

Table 21. First Semester Grade 9 Mean Weighted GPA and Mean Cumulative Weighted GPA for Currently Enrolled Black Students by Female and Male, Classes of 2002 and 2003 ($p < .05$)

Semester	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Correlation
First Semester	Female	2.45	158	.792568	.063053	
Cumulative	Female	2.48	158	.839375	.066777	.861
First Semester	Male	2.00	165	.903175	.073120	
Cumulative	Male	2.05	165	.757100	.058940	.803

What explains the absence of growth in the mean cumulative weighted GPAs for Black female and male students since their first semester of Grade 9? As these students progress from one grade level to the next, there appears to be no academic growth as evidenced by the absence of change in their

cumulative weighted GPAs since their first semester of Grade 9. Moreover, the AAST does not find growth in mean cumulative weighted GPAs for Black female and male students as we find for comparable White female and male students since their first semester of Grade 9, either during their high school enrollment or upon graduation.

Cumulative Weighted GPA Correlated with College Entrance Test Scores

The AAST also investigated the relationship between weighted GPAs and college entrance test scores for White and Black students. Weighted GPA is considered to be a strong indicator of success in high school and some believe it is more valued as a predictor of college admission than ACT and SAT test scores. There are statistically significant correlations between cumulative weighted GPAs and both ACT composite and SAT combined test scores for both White and Black students (see tables 22 and 23).

Table 22. Correlation Between Cumulative Weighted GPA, ACT Composite and SAT Combined Test Scores for White Students; Class of 2000

WHITE	Cumulative Weighted GPA	ACT Composite	SAT Combined
Cumulative Weighted GPA	1.000	.728**	.675**
N		314	206
ACT Composite	.728*	1.000	.883*
N	314	314	174
SAT Combined	.675**	.883**	1.000
N	206	174	206

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 23. Correlation Between Cumulative Weighted GPA, ACT Composite and SAT Combined Test Scores for Black Students; Class of 2000

BLACK	Cumulative Weighted GPA	ACT Composite	SAT Combined
Cumulative Weighted GPA	1.000	.705**	.791**
N		89	30
ACT Composite	.705**	1.000	.897*
N	89	89	24
SAT Combined	.791**	.897**	1.000
N	30	24	30

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Black students' cumulative weighted GPAs are more highly correlated with SAT combined test scores than those of their White student counterparts. The AAST had incorrectly assumed that the correlation between weighted GPAs and SAT combined scores would be higher for White students. Students at

OPRFHS who take the SAT tend to be higher achievers. What explains this statistically significant finding? Our interpretation reverts to the need to investigate the weighted GPA and its importance to White students.

White students at OPRFHS do extremely well in maintaining a mean cumulative weighted GPA of 3.26. A majority of White students are more likely to receive a grade of A or B as compared to their Black student counterparts. The low correlations of weighted GPAs with standardized test scores for White students as compared to Black students may be associated with possible grade inflation. White students appear to perform well on the standards set in virtually all OPRFHS courses regardless of level. White students' lower weighted GPA correlation with SAT combined scores suggests that their weighted GPA is not a strong predictor of their performance on college entrance examinations. Therefore, the AAST hypothesizes that the weighted GPA as one measure of success for White students may not be the most accurate way to assess their achievement. Many White students appear to be performing well in the curricular standards set by the high school but not as well on college entrance exams. The AAST reiterates its belief that all students must continually be challenged and nurtured even when they appear to have performed well on curricular standards set by OPRFHS. A higher degree of challenge could possibly produce a higher correlation between weighted GPA and standardized test scores.

The Learning Community Performance Gap and Sender Schools

Throughout the process of inquiry to understand the systemic nature of the learning community performance gap, the AAST was confronted with statements from faculty and staff that suggested the gap comes mostly from students who enter the high school from outside the district, particularly from Chicago. Tables 24 and 25 provide data on sender schools and OPRFHS mean weighted GPAs for White and Black students. Most students who enter the high school come from District 97 (Oak Park) sender schools (825 for White students and 378 for Black students). Although Black students who enter OPRFHS from other public elementary or high schools have lower mean GPAs than those from sender Districts 97 and 90 (River Forest), the learning community performance gap is also clearly prevalent among students from these two sender districts. Black students from District 97 have a high school mean weighted GPA of a 2.31 whereas White students from sender District 97 have a high school mean weighted GPA of 3.30. This constitutes almost a one-point gap. Moreover, a less dramatic gap exists for Black and White students from sender District 90: Black student high school mean weighted GPA is 2.80 compared to White student high school mean weighted GPA of 3.54. The differences in high school mean weighted GPA distribution for Black and White students by sender schools are statistically significant.

Table 24. Sender School and High School Mean Weighted GPA for White Students, Sophomore to Senior; 1999-2000 (p <.05)

Sender School	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
District 97(Oak Park Public)	3.30	825	.913352	.031799
District 90 (River Forest Public)	3.54	225	.837178	.055812
Other Public Elementary	3.04	34	.930929	.159653
Other High School	2.76	80	.970355	.108489
Parochial & Private	3.10	128	.997163	.088138
Total	3.28	1292	.930113	.025876

Table 25. Sender School and High School Mean Weighted GPA for Black Students; Sophomore to Senior; 1999-2000 (p < .05)

Sender School	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
District 97 (Oak Park Public)	2.31	378	.825443	.042456
District 90 (River Forest Public)	2.80	7	1.253301	.473703
Other Public Elementary	2.03	54	.740139	.100720
Other High School	1.81	61	.851406	.109011
Parochial & Private	2.29	7	.918651	.347217
Total	2.22	507	.844783	.037518

Thus, students coming from sender Districts 97 and 90 are as involved in the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS as students who come to this high school from other sender schools.

Summary

There is a systemic learning community performance gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School. The learning community performance gap suggests that two communities exist at the high school: one for White students that places them at academic promise and another for Black students that places them at academic risk. Efforts need to be made to understand why African American seniors who perform well on standardized tests and who take twelve or more honors courses do not realize comparable success in receiving grades of A or B when compared to their White student counterparts. In fact, the differential outcome in overall mean weighted GPAs for these two groups with apparently comparable skills is even more startling and compelling. White students who have less experience in taking honors-level courses tend to have a higher success rate than Black students who have more experience in taking honors-level courses. In an ideal world, this should not be the case. At Oak Park and River Forest High School, reality is far from the ideal. Our goal is to utilize these startling findings to identify promising opportunities for change and to implement appropriate changes that are not only evidence-based but also show strong potential for reducing and eliminating the learning community performance gap.

Although the AAST anticipated that the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS would be systemic, we did not expect grade distributions in honors courses to be so dramatically different for White and Black students and especially for students taking twelve or more honors courses. The AAST's interrogation of grade distribution in honors courses unfolded an unanticipated phenomenon, one which we are currently unable to explain but which needs to be addressed. First, we need to further investigate the extent of possible grade inflation in the honors program. Additionally, the OPRFHS learning community needs to better understand the academic culture of the honors program to ascertain teacher and student expectations. Furthermore, we must study the degree to which Black students in honors courses are perceived by teachers and their White student counterparts as needing to prove that they are "smart." Black students who decide to try honors courses must know that these courses are demanding and must initially perceive themselves as being capable of meeting the challenge. Finally, the learning community must explore whether or not honors courses carry some type of privilege not readily available to Black students.

To create the opportunity to learn from these quantitative findings, the AAST developed an intensive and extensive qualitative research design to further interrogate the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. A representative group of African American students at Oak Park and River Forest High School was selected through the development of a stratified random sample. It is to this process and its findings that we now turn.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLE

In order to systematically measure and understand the subjective utility of each of the six research hypotheses, the AAST developed the following procedures to guide the research design:

1. Established a comprehensive management information system by taking disaggregated data and compiling it into a common aggregated data file (e.g., GPA, attendance, discipline, extracurricular participation, special services).
2. Developed an analytical environment by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to run statistical tests on patterns, trends and correlations in the data sets established in item 1.
3. Selected a stratified random sample of low, middle and high achieving African American students.
4. Notified parents and requested their permission for the participation of the stratified random sample of students (see appendix F).
5. Created a demographic survey instrument administered to each student who participated in the sample (see appendix G).
6. Acquired the use of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) (Cross, 1978; Helms, 1990) and administered the scale to each student who participated in the sample.
7. Assembled a portfolio for each student to develop a "theory of the student."
8. Developed a videotaped interview protocol.
9. Developed an analytical environment by using QSR N5 (a software for qualitative data analysis) to organize, interpret and analyze all interview data.
10. Developed a matched sample of parents of low, middle and high achieving African American students and requested parent participation in focus groups.

Sampling Frame

The AAST developed five population parameters to select a stratified random sample of African American students who were sophomores, juniors and seniors during the 2000-2001 academic year at OPRFHS. The sample parameters included the following:

1. Weighted Grade Point Average (see appendix H), which includes **BELOW** as measured by 2.0 and under; **MIDDLE** as measured by the interval between 2.0 and 3.5; and **HIGH** as measured by 3.5 and above.
2. Attendance irregularities, which is the sum, across class periods, of absences and tardies for a given school year.
3. Disciplinary record that includes no disciplinary record, warning, detention, single in-school suspension (ISS), after-school suspension (ASP), multiple ISS and/or ASP, and out-of-school suspension (OSS) or multiple OSS.
4. Family structure, which includes mother and father, mother only, father only, or other.

5. Sender school student information, which includes Oak Park and River Forest public and private schools as well as non-Oak Park and River Forest public and private schools.

A total of fifty-three African American sophomores, juniors and seniors received parental approval to participate in our study. A total of forty-one African American students were eventually available to participate in the interview component of the study.

Characteristics of Sample Population

Our sample of fifty-three African American students is representative of the total population of African American students at OPRFHS and is proportionately distributed by grade level, gender and mean weighted GPA (see table 26).

Table 26. Characteristics of Representative Sample of Black Students by Grade Level, Gender and Mean Weighted GPA

Population	Sample	Non-Sample	Total
10 th Grade	15	170	185
11 th Grade	19	143	162
12 th Grade	19	147	166
Total	53	460	513
Male	24	237	261
Female	29	223	252
Mean Weighted GPA	2.37	2.26	2.27

In table 27, type of sender school is proportionately distributed throughout the sample. The majority of students in the sample and the overall population come from local sender districts.

Table 27. Characteristics of Representative Sample by Type of Sender School

Population	Sample	Non-Sample	Total
Local Public Sender Schools	41	353	394
Other Public Sender Schools	6	48	54
Private Sender Schools	1	6	7
Other High Schools	5	57	62
Total	53	460	513

In table 28, family structure is proportionately distributed throughout the sample. Over half of the African American students at OPRFHS come from mother-only families.

Table 28. Characteristics of Representative Sample by Family Structure

Population	Sample	Non-Sample	Total
Mother & Father	20	150	170
Mother Only	30	237	267
Father Only	1	28	29
Other	2	45	47
Total	53	460	513

Encounters with the discipline system and attendance irregularities are proportionally distributed throughout the sample (see table 29).

Table 29. Characteristics of Representative Sample by Disciplinary and Attendance Records

Discipline and Attendance	Sample	Non-Sample	Total
No Discipline Record	29	242	271
Warning	7	43	50
Detention	8	69	77
Single ISS or ASP	4	43	47
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	3	38	41
OSS or Multiple OSS	2	25	27
Total	53	460	513
Attendance Irregularities*	147.6226*	152.1913*	152.6160*

* Mean Number

Because the sample is representative of the total population of African American students at OPRFHS, findings from the study of this representative sample can be generalized to the total population of African American students in the school.

Demographic Survey

The AAST developed a demographic survey to measure the following items:

1. School at which students completed their elementary education;
2. Grade level in which students entered the OPRF public school system;
3. Number of schools which students attended (public and private) Grades K-6;
4. Number of schools which students attended (public and private) Grades 7-8;
5. Number of schools which students attended (public and private) Grades 9-12;
6. Number of family members who attended OPRFHS;
7. Highest level of mother's or stepmother's education;
8. Occupation of mother or stepmother;
9. Highest level of father's or stepfather's education;
10. Occupation of father or stepfather;
11. Parents or guardians with whom students reside;

12. Identification of extended family—non-parent, legal guardian, foster parent, friend, alone;
13. Number of brothers and sisters of students;
14. Family income;
15. Number of times that students attended summer school;
16. Reason(s) for attending summer school;
17. Resources available in home;
18. Sources within the school which students use for extra help.

Parents who agreed to allow their children to participate in the study were asked to assist their students in the completion of those items on the demographic survey that required parental input...questions 8 through 12 and question 14 (see appendix G).

Student Portfolios: “The Theory of the Student”

The AAST designed a student portfolio that guided the development of a set of both standard and unique questions for the face-to-face interviews with each student in the sample who was available for this component of the study. Development of the student portfolio involved the method of triangulation in which quantitative and qualitative information about the student was drawn from a variety of information systems. This process illuminated for the AAST the multiple and complex ways in which African American students not only perform academically but also perceive their racial identity at OPRFHS. The AAST reviewed each student’s portfolio in detail and then formulated a “theory of the student.” The theory of the student consisted of developing interview directions and questions about each student’s academic achievement process. The interview protocol contained both standardized questions which were designed for all students and questions which were unique to individual students (see appendix I). The portfolio included:

- GPA and weighted GPA
- Attendance irregularities
- Discipline record
- Participation in extracurricular activities (homogeneous and heterogeneous)
- Family status
- Sender school
- Attempted honors courses
- Results of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS)
- Education, occupation and income of parent(s)
- Resources available in the home and resources used at school
- Official transcript

- Working transcript
- Final examination grades
- Teacher progress reports
- Teacher comments for current semester courses.

Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale and the Triple Quandary

The AAST used the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) as a surrogate measure of the triple quandary—mainstream [White] experience, minority experience and Black cultural experience (see explanation in “The Research Model”). To our knowledge, this study is the first time that the BRIAS has been used to investigate the effect of racial identity on high school student achievement.⁶

The BRIAS has been widely used in the social sciences to understand racial identity. This tool consists of twenty-nine items that the respondent is asked to rank according to the following scale: 1) Strongly Agree; 2) Agree; 3) Uncertain; 4) Disagree; and 5) Strongly Disagree. This instrument was first created by William E. Cross, Jr. and further developed by Janet E. Helms. The Helms BRIAS has been associated with a range of behavioral, affective, cognitive and cultural variables. Helms and Parham found that racial identity has a direct influence on self-esteem (Attitudes of Racial Identity and Self-Esteem: An Exploratory Investigation 136). Past usage of the BRIAS showed that one or more of the four statuses in this instrument are related to preference for counselors’ race (Helms and Parham), to affective state (Helms and Parham), to cultural values (Helms and Cater) and to cognitive styles (Helms). BRIAS is constructed to measure these four statuses:

1. **Pre-Encounter (*Mainstream [White] Experience*):** This status is characterized by dependency on White cultural norms for self-definition and approval as well as by attitudes that are White-identified and Black-rejective.
2. **Encounter (*Minority Experience*):** This status is marked by feelings of racial identity confusion and by an increasing desire to cultivate a Black identity. Attitudes at this status are often based on an experience that challenges preconceived notions of self (e.g., “Don’t you know you’re Black!”).
3. **Immersion-Emersion (*Black Cultural Experience*):** This status is characterized by absorption in the Black experience and sweeping rejection of the White cultural world. Attitudes at this status are Black-identified and White-rejective.
4. **Internalization (*Research Hypothesis Six: “The Negotiated Success Stream”*):** In this status, one sees strengths and weaknesses in both races while viewing one’s Black identity as a positive and a valued aspect of self. Attitudes in this status are Black-identified but are not White-rejective.

⁶ In a telephone conversation, Janet Helms noted that the BRIAS has never been used with high school students.

The AAST encouraged all parents to review the scale before having their son or daughter complete it. Parents were asked to keep in mind that the AAST did not endorse any of the statements which appeared on the scale. Parents were also cautioned that some statements/items on the BRIAS were provocative and could elicit strong reactions. Finally, parents were informed that because racial identity is a very important attribute that is related to African American student achievement and the learning community performance gap at Oak Park and River Forest High School, the BRIAS was carefully and deliberately selected by the AAST as a critical tool in the research study.

Each status reflects experiences of being either in a mainstream [White] experience, a minority experience or a Black cultural experience. The AAST hypothesized that students in the sample who endorsed a Black identity that was not White-rejective (the status of internalization) were more likely to successfully negotiate the triple quandary. However, the AAST remained mindful that the BRIAS is a narrow and limited measure of the triple quandary and of African American student identity (see “The Research Model”).

Analysis of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS)

The results of the study show that the BRIAS status of internalization is more likely to be endorsed by students in the sample. Table 30 shows the mean status scores of students in the sample for each of the four statuses measured by BRIAS: the lower the mean, the greater the endorsement of that status. The AAST believes that the use of the BRIAS in combination with a series of other research techniques strengthens our understanding of African American students and the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS.

Table 30. Sample Mean Status Scores for Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) ($p < .05$)

Status	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
Pre-encounter	4.04245	.561133	.077077
Encounter	3.10692	.715439	.098273
Immersion	3.73855	.511054	.070199
Internalization	2.32933	.401532	.055155

The results of the BRIAS were revealing. The sample of OPRFHS African American students involved in our research clearly rejected pre-encounter as a status and leaned considerably toward disagreeing with the immersion status. The status that seemed ambivalent for our sample of students was encounter because the sample neither endorsed nor rejected encounter. This may suggest that some of the items used to measure this scale created some degree of uncertainty for students in the sample.

A simple correlation revealed that the internalization score was negatively correlated with student weighted GPA: the lower the internalization score, the higher the weighted GPA. Thus, African

American students in the sample who endorsed internalization were more likely to have higher weighted GPAs (see table 31).

Table 31. Correlation of Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) and Weighted GPA

Correlation Matrix	Weighted GPA	Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization
Weighted GPA	1.00				
Pre-encounter	.100	1.00			
Encounter	-.029	-.041	1.00		
Immersion	.038	.250	.439**	1.00	
Internalization	-.313*	-.362**	.131	.086	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Overall, our findings suggest that African American students in the sample are less likely to express an attitude and/or identity that over-values a White or a Black cultural identity. They do not reject White cultural norms; instead, they negotiate mainstream [White], minority and Black cultural experiences within the social ecology and everyday construction of the school. This is an important finding because it suggests that African American student achievement is associated with internalization, our sixth research hypothesis. In this hypothesis, the AAST asserts that African American students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary are more likely to:

- Develop peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class and gender boundaries;
- Participate in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities;
- Develop coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies between mainstream [White] values and their home and community values;
- Internalize only those mainstream [White] values which they define as necessary for their academic achievement.

The more the endorsement of internalization on the BRIAS, the more students negotiate mainstream [White], minority and Black cultural experiences in the school without compromising or diminishing either their identity or the identity of other groups in the school. However, endorsement of internalization may reduce but does not eliminate the learning community performance gap between African American and White students.

A statistically significant correlation between encounter and immersion (.439) suggests that students who do not endorse encounter also do not endorse immersion: the higher the score, the less the endorsement. Neither a need to find and over-identify with a Black self nor a need to reject White culture is endorsed by the sample. Moreover, the significant negative correlation between internalization and pre-encounter straightforwardly suggests that students in the sample who endorse internalization (a score

of 2 or less) are more likely to reject the pre-encounter status of the BRIAS. Thus, the need to “act white” to achieve academically at OPRFHS is not endorsed by the sample (Fordham and Ogbu 176).

A cluster of eleven items on the BRIAS measured internalization. Investigation of these eleven items reveals that although a quarter of the students in the sample endorsed internalization, they responded differently from other students in the sample on items that measured: “I feel comfortable wherever I am;” “I feel good about being Black but don’t limit myself to Black activities;” and “I involve myself in social action and political groups even if there are no other Blacks involved.” The AAST finds that students in the sample who either disagreed or strongly disagreed with these three items are not necessarily endorsing the full scope of internalization but rather are clearly endorsing a stronger Black identity. Thus, the qualitative data led the AAST to discover two distinct groups, a bi-modal distribution, within the internalization status for the sample of African American students. We named the group that endorsed internalization by agreeing with the above three questions the “internalized negotiated success stream.” That is, based on data from their videotaped interviews, these students satisfied all four conditions of our triple quandary hypothesis. Furthermore, the AAST named the other group that did not agree with the above BRIAS internalization statements the “internalized non-negotiated stream” because student interviews revealed their reluctance to develop heterogeneous peer groups and to participate in heterogeneous extracurricular activities. However, three of the students in this group were relatively academically successful: they had weighted GPAs that ranged from 2.5 to 3.0. Thus, these students attempted to perform academically in the school without feeling the need to negotiate the several experiences of the triple quandary to succeed. The other nine students in the internalized non-negotiated stream had various issues which were evident both in their GPAs and in their discipline records.

Table 32 shows frequency distributions of the internalized negotiated success stream and of the non-negotiated success stream in our sample. Although there were fourteen students in the non-negotiated stream, we had weighted GPA data on only twelve of these students. (One of the fourteen students was a new student at the time of the study, and the other student was enrolled in special education.) African American female students were the larger gender group in the internalized negotiated success stream (66.7%) while male students constituted the larger gender group in the non-negotiated internalized stream (78.6%). African American students in the non-negotiated stream were more likely to live with both parents (42.9%) than were those in the internalized negotiated success stream (35.9%). Overall, a majority of both the internalized negotiated success stream and the non-negotiated success stream reside with their mothers, 56.4% and 57.1%, respectively. Also, table 32 shows a statistically significant difference in mean weighted GPA between those in the internalized negotiated success stream and those in the non-negotiated stream, 2.50 compared to 1.79, respectively. Moreover, there are statistically significant differences in ACT composite scores (19.68 compared to 14.75) and scores on the BRIAS

internalization status (2.17 compared to 2.74) between students in the internalized negotiated success stream and those in the non-negotiated stream, respectively. Although the means for attendance irregularities appear to be different, there is no statistically significant difference ($p < .106$).

Table 32. Frequency Distribution for Internalized Negotiated Success Stream and Non-Negotiated Stream

Attribute and Code	Negotiated Success Stream	Non-Negotiated Stream	Total
GENDER			
Female (Count)	26	3	29
% Within Gender	89.7%	10.3%	100.0%
% Within Group	66.7%	21.4%	54.7%
Male (Count)	13	11	24
% Within Gender	54.2%	45.8%	100.0%
% Within Group	33.3%	78.6%	45.3%
Total (Count)	39	14	53
% Within Gender	73.6%	26.4%	100.0%
RESIDES WITH:			
Mother/Father (Count)	14	6	20
% Within Mother/Father	70.0%	30.0%	100.0%
% Within Group	35.9%	42.9%	37.7%
Mother Only (Count)	22	8	30
% Within Mother	73.3%	26.7%	100.0%
% Within Group	56.4%	57.1%	56.6%
Father Only (Count)	1		1
% Within Father	100.0%		100.0%
% Within Group	2.6%		1.9%
Other (Count)	2		2
% Within Other	100.0%		100.0%
% Within Group	5.1%		3.8%
Total (Count)	39	14	53
% Within Resides With	73.6%	26.4%	100.0%
% Within Group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean Weighted GPA			
Mean	2.50*	1.79	
Count	39	14	
Attendance Irregularities			
Mean	129.12	199.14	
Count	39	14	
ACT Comp			
Composite	19.68**	14.75	
Count	19	4	
BRIAS Internalization			
Mean	2.17*	2.74	

* $P < 0.05$ ** $P < 0.06$

Table 33 repeats the statistically significant and negative correlation found between the BRIAS internalization status and weighted GPA. The more that African American students in the sample endorsed the status of internalization, the higher was their mean weighted GPA. This finding is true for the bi-modal BRIAS group, or which the AAST labeled the non-negotiated stream. However, the correlation between weighted GPA and the BRIAS bi-modal measure is lower (-.332) than the correlation with BRIAS internalization which is still negative (-.313). However, only three students in the non-negotiated stream had weighted GPAs above 3.00. The remaining nine students, all male, had weighted GPAs below 2.00.

Table 33. Correlation Between Weighted GPA, BRIAS Internalization and the Bi-Modal BRIAS Measure (Non-Negotiated Stream)

		Weighted GPA	BRIAS Internalization	BRIAS Bi-Modal Measure
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.00	-.313*	-.332
	N	51	51	51
BRIAS Internalization	Pearson Correlation	-.313*	1.00	.660**
	N	51	53	53
BRIAS Bi-Modal Measure	Pearson Correlation	-.332*	.660**	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The AAST's detailed review of each videotape and the results of the BRIAS reveal that there are twelve students in the sample who do endorse internalization. They all have a mean score below 3.0 on internalization and most have low grade point averages with weighted GPAs below 2.00.

Tables 34 and 35 reveal two populations with different outcomes in terms of mean weighted GPAs and discipline records. In the group with no discipline records, students in the internalized non-negotiated stream had a mean weighted GPA of 3.09 compared to that of students in the internalized negotiated success stream of 2.78. Based on their videotaped interviews, the three African American students in the internalized non-negotiated stream look almost identical to the twenty-four African American students in the internalized negotiated success stream. That is, there are no differences in apparel, language and attentiveness during the interviews between the three students in the non-negotiated stream and the twenty-four students in the internalized negotiated success stream. During the interviews, students in both groups wore casual attire that looked modern but conservative compared to "hip-hop" styles. Both groups spoke in standard English. Both groups addressed the interviewer with non-verbal cues that showed interest and investment in the interview process. In short, one would not know that the students in these two groups are different if judged by appearance, language and attentiveness during the

interview. Thus, those students in the internalized negotiated success stream appear to have developed strategies to negotiate their success while three students in the internalized non-negotiated stream seem to have decided to “blend-in” and not call attention to themselves. To some degree, the latter group negotiated an outward appearance while maintaining a Black identity. This might be what Boykin meant by referring to those in the triple quandary who “get over” while endorsing a Black identity (The Triple Quandary and the Schooling of Afro-American Children 78).

Table 34. Internalized Non-Negotiated Stream by Mean Weighted GPA (2000) and Discipline Record; 1999/2000 ($p < .01$)

Discipline Record 1999/2000	N	Weighted GPA	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
No Discipline Record	3	3.09	.560804	.323780
Warning	0			
Detention	3	1.59	.699172	.403667
Single ISS or ASP	3	1.62	.322311	.186086
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	2	0.77	.171120	.121000
OSS or Multiple OSS	1	1.13		
Total	12	1.79		

Table 35. Internalized Negotiated Success Stream by Mean Weighted GPA (2000) and Discipline Record 1999/2000 ($p < .19$)

Discipline Record 1999/2000	N	Weighted GPA	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
No Discipline Record	24	2.78	1.023916	.209006
Warning	7	1.97	.396153	.149732
Detention	5	2.30	.438493	.196100
Single ISS or ASP	1	2.68		
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	1	1.31		
OSS or Multiple OSS	1	1.68		
Total	39	2.50		

Overall, students in the internalized negotiated success stream have a higher mean weighted GPA (2.50) compared to the mean weighted GPA (1.79) of those students in the internalized non-negotiated stream. The remaining nine students in the internalized non-negotiated stream who did not experience academic success have discipline records and low mean weighted GPAs. These students seem to “act out” their Black identity in dress, demeanor and speech often calling attention to themselves in classroom and hallway encounters with OPRFHS faculty and staff. Thus, their behavior is found to be disruptive and defiant of authority. Consequently, disciplinary action is required. The AAST found that these nine African American students (all male) had encountered the discipline system because of their behaviors. In their videotaped interviews, most of these students adopted postures of disinterest evident in their body language: slouching, maintaining poor eye contact and showing minimal interest

until questions about discipline were raised. Most described the disciplinary consequences of their behavior as being too severe. They perceived that their “side of the story” was seldom heard or believed by the disciplinary staff.

The AAST concludes that this finding invites important opportunities for the learning community to better understand a group of African American males who have internalized a Black identity but who are unwilling or ill equipped to negotiate the larger mainstream [White] culture and their minority status. Because these students very clearly described their encounters with the discipline system and elaborately articulated their perspectives about it, the AAST believes that these students have positive assets that are currently unidentified, undeveloped or untapped by the learning community. Furthermore, the AAST believes that these students can acquire skills and strategies to adopt behaviors associated with the internalized negotiated success stream. For the school or any system within the school’s structure to focus primarily on these students’ deficits automatically places them at academic risk. The school must persistently harness and unreservedly dedicate adequate resources to determine how the learning community can identify the assets of such students. Although most African American students are placed at academic risk in the learning community at OPRFHS, these nine students and others like them require a radical change in investment to determine their assets and to develop tactics that educators can utilize to place them at academic promise.

The twenty-four students with no discipline records in the internalized negotiated success stream were more likely to receive a grade of A or B in honors courses (see table 36). This low correlation reflects the learning community performance gap described in “A Quantitative Analysis of the Gap.” These twenty-four students were more likely to score higher on ACT and SAT standardized tests than were their Black student counterparts in the internalized non-negotiated stream (see tables 37 and 38). Even though students in the internalized negotiated success stream experienced a gap in their learning performance, they were significantly more successful than those in the internalized non-negotiated stream.

Table 36. Correlation Matrix of Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale and Honors Success Fraction

	Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	Honors A or B
Pre-encounter	1.00				
Encounter	-.041	1.00			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.00		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.00	
Honors A or B	.309	-.044	0.070	-.295*	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 37. Correlation Matrix of Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale and SAT Combined Scores

	Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	SAT Comb.
Pre-encounter	1.00				
Encounter	-.041	1.00			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.00		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.00	
SAT Combined	.434	-.113	-.0300	-.373*	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 38. Correlation Matrix of Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale and ACT Composite Scores

	Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	ACT Comp.
Pre-encounter	1.00				
Encounter	-.041	1.00			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.00		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.00	
ACT Composite	.269	-.010	0.127	-.475**	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

These findings suggest that the assets of both high and low performing African American students in the learning community at OPRFHS are not being either accurately identified or fully developed by all stakeholders; this situation places most African American students at academic risk.

Student Voices: Analysis of Interview Data

Forty-one students in the sample participated in the videotaped interview process. During the interviews, students were challenged to speak candidly about their weighted GPAs as well as about factors which explained their GPAs. Most of the students blamed themselves for what they perceived as not working up to their academic potential. However, when probed for details, students discussed more about the nuances of their practices and their everyday lived experiences that became important explanations for their weighted GPAs. The AAST meticulously reviewed all forty-one videotaped interviews and the almost fifteen hundred pages of transcription of these interviews. After each review, the AAST reflected on our “theory of the student” as developed from the student portfolio and on the “reality of the student” as revealed during the videotaped interview. In some cases, we were startled that students with very low GPAs were articulate about reasons for their poor academic performance. Thus, the AAST was often able to discern the multidimensional, complicated and complex factors that explained each student’s weighted GPA.

The following discussion of the six hypotheses formulated by the AAST includes supporting quotations drawn from students’ videotaped interviews. These selected quotations represent the

responses offered and the sentiments expressed by students in the entire sample; these quotations further reflect the AAST's commitment to include in this report the voices of students at every academic achievement level in the sample. Finally, the quotations from the interviews also provide important information about the multidimensional, complicated and complex factors that explain each student's academic situation. Clearly, the following quotations are just a sample of those accumulated during the interview process.

School climate is related to how students feel and how they express their feelings in classroom and non-classroom situations. Students who believe that they can share their feelings and intellects openly and honestly with faculty and staff are more likely to experience the school as a safe and reinforcing environment. Students who feel that they are not able to express openly and to share candidly their feelings and intellects are more likely to perceive and experience the school as uncomfortable. Thus, the AAST's first hypothesis seeks to ascertain the degree to which school climate is perceived and experienced by students as a safe and reinforcing environment in sharing both one's feelings and one's intellect:

Hypothesis One: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who find school (peers, teachers, staff, administration) to be both a safe and a reinforcing environment in sharing and expressing feelings and intellect.

The following two quotations reflect alienation and separation from school climate which many students in the sample express in their interviews. One student feels completely helpless and powerless while another feels that involvement in extracurricular activities that "cross-over" challenges one's social identity and group boundaries. Clearly, students who enter the school with a need to get involved often articulate the consequences of their involvement as impacting their identity.

- "And then when I get here [OPRFHS], it's like just a wall and I ain't got no arms to climb it. I ain't trying to disappoint my family. I want to be able to achieve in school and get good grades and stuff, but there is a part of me that is saying the hell with it if I have to do all this work and still get nowhere. It's like having a dead end job, not going anywhere, and having to do so much and getting nothing out of it."
- "I think a lot of it is, like you said, they need to say, ' We want you involved.' A lot of people feel reproach, and they don't want to follow other students because they don't think they'll be accepted and that's a big thing--especially being a teenager and being in the environment. You want to be accepted, and wherever you fit in is where you're comfortable. And because a lot of African Americans now choose not to participate, younger African Americans, especially freshmen, come along and say, 'Well, African American kids who are juniors and seniors don't participate, and I'm Black so I'm not going to participate either because then I'm not accepted by my fellow Black people.' It's almost like they have their own color group because it's something they identify with; it's something they're comfortable with. It's a very sad thing, but it's prevalent."

During passing periods, the third floor hallway near the Office of Curriculum and Instruction is a common space and place for African American students to be “down.” This area is both a contentious space and a comfort zone for African Americans students. Intra-group interpretations of the third floor space and its dynamics are articulated in the following quotation. This student recognizes and describes in the social ecology of the school both the positive need for the space as well as the negative external reactions which “other races” might have because of their limited involvement with Black students. In one sense, this quotation suggests that this area is a consequence of the few spaces where African American students can openly share their feelings and intellects. Some of the actions of students when they gather in this space are more likely perceived as disrespectful and non-intellectual, yet Black students with high grade point averages value the space for its presence of a “large amount of African Americans.” In another sense, the third floor area becomes a place where one can be absorbed into a common racial group without having to identify with the totality of the group and with what it represents to outsiders and insiders.

- “The third floor hallway--a lot of kids stand there and, in my opinion, just simply act ignorant. They scream real loud, they curse, and they make themselves look bad. They make African American students as a whole look bad to other students of other races who don't know anyone Black. They see that and they think that's how we are. And maybe not completely, but those who haven't expanded their mind yet, you know, that's what they see. And it's tempting to get mad at those students who act wild and say, ‘You know, you're making us look bad, and why are you acting like that? I know you don't usually act like that; there's no need.’ But, at the same time, you have to understand that this is their comfort zone and that's where there are a large amount of African Americans and it's just--it's a natural way for humans to act.”

The following student quotation addresses the OPRFHS *Code of Conduct* and discipline system. African American students are more likely to be disciplined for behavior that is described as defiant, aggressive and disruptive. One-third of the African American males in the Class of 2000-2001 were involved with the discipline system during their freshman year. This student's perception of “work harder because we is Black” suggests that the disciplinary climate is less flexible for African American students who conclude that they are “outsiders,” that is, they are restricted from participating fully in the everyday life of the school. Many who have been deeply involved in the discipline system become estranged from the school climate because they feel that they are bound by a behavior contract that cuts them off from participating in school activities. An issue which merits further investigation is whether long-term restrictions on student involvement in extracurricular activities result in a reduction of continued misbehavior.

- “... I would say, loosen up on the code of conduct and get rid of that contract. Because the contract is basically you signing your life away ... I think Oak Park can do without the contract, and I believe that they could loosen up on the code of conduct. Because the code of conduct, I mean, most of that is ... African American people, females and

males, females and males do get put on contract. Man, if you a freshman and you get on contract, they have you on until you graduate. Because I signed the contract my freshman year, and it says until the year of 2005 that I could not participate or be allowed to any after school activities, meaning like even though I graduated, I couldn't come here to visit. I couldn't come to see--because I have a little brother here and he's a freshman now--say if he was playing in a kind of sport, you know, I wouldn't be able to come and see him play a sport."

Learning about and embracing student social networks inside and outside school are important. Students come to school with affective and cognitive skills (Comer, 1). Both are part of child and student development and must be part of the school's developmental process, the purpose of which is to understand the whole child and not just an individual and his/her individual actions. Building ways to relate to students as soon as they enter the discipline system is a key intervention and is expressed through the following students' voices:

- "What I see is, I think there should be a little more stricter discipline. When a person--first time a person ever gets into a conflict--has to go to the dean, I believe that maybe they should talk to a counselor or call home to see what's going on. Because it may not have started in school; it might have started at home. Not to say that that's their first time in dean's discipline; it's not to say that's not going to be in there a second time. I think they need to get the punishment for whatever happened in school but try to figure out what's going on out of school, try to get to the bottom of it. It seems like it has to be a number of things that happened before a student is sat down and talked to by a counselor or teacher or somebody. I think it should start the very first time. It seems if it doesn't start the first time, then it builds up, builds up, builds up and more stuff seems to happen. The student gets angrier and probably more withdrawn."
- "Most of the time what goes on in school, the parents never find out. There should be more phone calls home, so the parent could know. Maybe if the parent would find out and know about what's going on, they may be able to help. But, most of the time the parent knows nothing until the child gets in serious trouble, maybe getting expelled or suspended. Then the parent finds out and the parent has no idea what's going on and they have to explain all of the way from the beginning that may have started months ago."

The AAST views the following as subsets of its first hypothesis because these further explain students' feelings about school climate and the school as a safe and reinforcing environment:

Teacher and School Climate

- "I personally love it when the teachers try their best to know the students and what they're doing. And like, I've had teachers that taught down to me and who have seen us as people, like this is my job and I have to do it. I've seen teachers that act like that. I've seen teachers that come alive; they are lively with their students, like they ask their students about things that they did. Like [name of teacher] for example, one guy, he would tell us any soccer games and (inaudible) it seemed like he tries to involve students and engage them in conversations and that makes the class a lot more interesting. The only bad thing is that sometimes you get distracted by talking so much that you get off the subject. But when the teacher tries to involve the student, get to know the student,

it's a lot better because you know what they're going through. You know, like a lot of teachers know, that the students don't want to be here, and then it's like, well, if you don't want to be here, I can just, you know, not care. I'll just sit up here and yell if he's bad and smile if he's good. You know, it's like boring. I like a teacher who has something to say."

Schooling Prior to OPRFHS

- "Yeah. I was a nerd. I was the one getting picked on every day. I was cool with a couple of people but a couple of people didn't like me for some reason. When I kind of got here to Emerson, it was different. It was like everybody was talking to me, but a couple of people didn't like me but that was natural. It was just odd—Blacks and Whites, Asians, all together. So it just blew me away."
- "And then there's like from me transferring from my other school. This school is a lot more challenging than the other school. So it's like some things that were not taught there should have been taught a long time before . . . is what you guys are teaching now and it's like it's more advanced. It's too advanced for me."

School Climate and Extracurricular Activities

- ". . . things that she's doing now in her English class are what I'm doing now and I'm a junior. And we're doing the same thing, so it's like, I mean, she comes home with maybe two books and my book bag is twenty-five pounds every day. So it's like there's no—it's like it's much easier so it's like—I would have to say, I think the extracurricular activities that get me involved and the encouragement to do things like that. That would be the difference between the junior high school and the high school. The first thing that comes to mind is get involved. Get in the clubs; look at who you can trust. I didn't realize that before, and it wasn't an emphasis put on it and it wasn't anything I thought big of. So the first thing would be to get involved. The second is your friends aren't going anywhere, so if you need help, you need to ask. Other than that, make sure you're on time because the school is really strict about the tardies and you'll get dropped without a second thought. So, other than that, have fun."

School Climate and Teacher Expectations

- "Right. I was ready for it, but I just wasn't expecting it. I was used to teachers just kind of like giving me an A basically without me working. The only difference is you actually have to prove it basically, that I knew what I be doing."
- "You know here like, the standards are high. For the Black students, the standards are not quite that high . . . I noticed Black students, they usually don't ask. So if you see them doing that, you could just say, well, I'm not going to bother. They're content but don't do that because, you know, it's saying that you don't care, you know, and it makes that person look bad. It makes a lot of people look bad. You know if a White student was getting a "D" or a "C," you know the teacher is more than likely to ask what's going on. If it's a Black student getting a "D," well then it's like, well, that's how it is. That's our luck, you know. They don't come to me for help. Why should I go to them?"

The second hypothesis formulated by the AAST seeks to ascertain the degree to which parents and the home environment support the achievement of African American students:

Hypothesis Two: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who experience in the home high academic achievement as a highly valued standard of performance and as a very high priority for investments of family resources on the part of parents (or parent surrogates).

Students who consistently experience this message in their homes are more likely to experience positive academic outcomes. The following student's quotation represents the comments of others whose homes are similarly supportive environments:

- "A lot of it has to do with my parents. It started long before I got here. There was always a work ethic. The rule was if my parents have to go to work, I have to go to school. And so school and schoolwork was always viewed as a responsibility. My parents haven't allowed me to work during the school year because they feel my focus should be on academics. Along with that, it's a personal competitive nature that I have. I want to do well. I want to do my best. And again, that comes from my parents."

Strong parental values that encourage educational achievement in the home are often reinforced by family participation in a network of community institutions and organizations that stimulate positive student performance and behavior. The following student's remarks echo this:

- "A lot of it's from my family and my church—things like that, that built me up as a person. Because in order to go out and do extracurricular activities, you have to have a certain amount of confidence to say, you know, I can do this. So they instilled a lot of that in me. I like my voice to be heard, to be honest, and I like to get involved and because I feel that my opinion is valid. I want it to be voiced at the school so that made me want to do BOSS because I thought I could help. You know, I don't want to say my own people because that really is not the right thing to say. But, you know, there was a group that I saw needed a lot of help and one that was off track last year; and this year we're wonderful. We're better than we have been in a long time. We achieved a lot. And so, I figure that I have certain gifts or certain traits that were positive, and I wanted to use them to benefit my community."

The above quotation also reflects how social networks which students bring to the school are used to model student interaction and participation in school organizations that resemble parent, family and community networks. Clearly, Black students seek to find in the school a social ecology that mirrors their social interaction in family and community. The need to experience the school as a part of their family and community network is a critical element in understanding their academic achievement, role and place in the school. Thus, social interaction in the school that "benefits my community" is not only viewed as rewarding but can also present the student with a burden of overcoming a minority experience that challenges the value of being a full and equal member of the school. The racial identity and social networks of Black students mediate the observed practices, policies, processes and organizational structures of school. Both school and student receive messages from descriptive practices and processes about the behavior that seems appropriate for the school. Overt and subtle messages are communicated to students about their ability to succeed, their reliability and their trustworthiness. Cultural characteristics

(beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, perceptions, world views), race, gender, social class, education and training affect the manner in which Black students and the school enact role sets for academic achievement.

The following are subsets of the second hypothesis; these further explain what parents can do and what they can make available to increase their students' academic success:

Parental Resources

- “So really it depends on the textbooks. And we have like other books at home too, so I can also use those as a reference.”
- “I distinctly remember not wanting to learn how to read. It was a real fight. Every day my mother would come home from work, and she would have like a set of learning-to-read books or something like that. I didn't want to do it; I just did not want to learn to read. But she, it was a for-real battle and she won. And every day, without fail, we would read together on the couch. We would do whatever it took, and because she pushed so hard, there were times that I was like, you know, what I'm not looking for my mother. I'm going to go outside. I'm going to do this. But she found me, and she made me do it. And I appreciate that now. But, at the time, it was not my idea of a good time.”
- “Yeah, sometimes when I ask, my mother will quiz me.”

Positive Parental Experiences

- “. . . It started long before I got here. There was always a work ethic. The rule was if my parents have to go to work, I have to go to school. My parents haven't allowed me to work during the school year because they feel my focus should be on academics. I want to do well. I want to do my best. And again, that comes from my parents.”
- “Both my parents work very hard and watching them as a young girl, I basically took it upon myself to work really hard too. I myself, I've always had an inner motivation of doing well in school, and so it kind of like, it was disappointing to me if I didn't do as well as I wanted to or if I didn't live up to an A on the test or, you know, a B+ or something. So, it was basically both. Like my parents and it was me too.”
- “Pretty much positive role models in my life. There is my grandfather. He is the one who doesn't try to sugar coat everything. He just gives it to me straight. Like, he explains everything to me in a way that I would want him to, to make sure I understand it. He would explain like as if one of my peers would explain it to me. My grandmother, she sort of pushes and puts so much faith in me. That's probably where I get that from. And my mother, I see how she works so hard because she is a single parent and she had me young, so I see how she struggles to work hard and to get the best for me.”

Negative Parental Experiences

- “Well, when I first came here, I was a low grade student, like an F student and a D student. And that was because my parents were going through a divorce, and I wasn't going to school or doing my work. And I was getting a bunch--a lot of discipline, a lot of yelling at me during that time. It was both of my parents. They was disciplining me about my grades . . . it was natural that they got a divorce and I should be doing my

work, not to worry about them, they got a divorce. And, I was thinking it was my fault that they got divorced. And it wasn't."

Family Responsibilities/Employment

The following excerpt from an interview dialogue reveals an effect that a demanding after-school job can have on a student's academic performance:

INTERVIEWER: "Okay. When do you schedule time to study?"

STUDENT: "Let's see. Like it would either be probably like right when I go home. If I don't have to work, then I take a nap and then do my homework."

INTERVIEWER: "Okay."

STUDENT: "Whatever. If I do have to work, I usually do my homework as soon as I get home from work so I can get right to sleep."

INTERVIEWER: "Okay. So, now when you say you work and you do your homework after work. What time do you get in after that?"

STUDENT: "I get off at 10:00, so I get in about 10:30, so it'd be about then."

INTERVIEWER: "Okay, all right. Where do you work?"

STUDENT: "At White Castle."

INTERVIEWER: "How many days a week?"

STUDENT: "It varies."

INTERVIEWER: "Okay."

STUDENT: "Like this week, I'm working 30 hours."

The AAST's third hypothesis seeks to ascertain the degree to which peers influence a student's academic performance:

Hypothesis Three: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and do associate with peers who value and invest in such achievement.

The following quotation illustrates how an African American student whose peers are academically successful will likely want to emulate positive peer behaviors and choices:

- "... plus it was, like, I see other students who are active. There's one girl, she's like active plus she gets good grades, plus she's just like, she's not one of those students who, like, I'm very smart, I'm very pretty, I'm just not going to talk to some people. She's a very cool person. She's, she's--like, I like her, she's nice. And she's like a good friend or whatever. So I like look at her and, it's like, she's in all the sports, she's the president of some clubs, she works, plus she has her own--plus she's a good student plus she still has a life. It was like, I'm sure there are plenty of other students in this school who have the responsibilities that I have and more, and I can't--I don't see why I shouldn't be able to do the same thing."

The presence of a critical mass of African American high achievers at OPRFHS may enhance the potential for peer modeling. However, African American students are seriously under-represented as enrollees in honors classes. The few who are in honors classes often express a sense of isolation because they feel their intellect is frequently tested by their knowledge of the Black experience instead of by their overall general knowledge.

- “Um, I’ll uh, it’s like a--it’s a non-describable feeling when I walk into a class and know that either I am the only Black in the class or I’m like the second Black in the class. And I had that class before. But if they’re seated, I just walk in like it’s nothing. Mostly, I have White friends in the class, and I’m like, ‘Hey, what’s up?’ ”

Student comments during the interviews also showed that they were keenly aware of the importance of peers and peer relationships in their lives. Students described how they attempted to retain academic progress as a priority while they remained active in their peer networks. Students valued being a good student as well as being a good friend.

Scheduling Time for Peers

- “If I want to go to this party, I have to be sure that I do have time, some time to get the work done. If I don’t, then I’ll try to do half and half. Like maybe I’ll do some of the paper and then go to the party and then do some later or do it the next day. I try to, if something presents itself, I try to accommodate it. I have to put my work first, but usually I try to accommodate it. It’s usually possible.”
- “I don’t usually go out on school nights. I try to restrict myself to not go out and do things with my friends Monday through Thursday. It’s hard, but I try to restrict myself on the phone because that’s really two big temptations, you know, to communicate with your friends and find out how they are and how they’re doing, things that are going on. But I try to stay off the phone until I have everything done. I pick a quiet room in the house to do my homework, where there aren’t too many distractions, which isn’t that hard to do. Basically, just because I now know what the distractions are, I stay away from them until I have time to focus on them once I’m done with my work.”
- “It was like on a Friday or a Saturday, and I’m thinking, like man, well, they gonna go study. And it was like weekend time for them to kick it. And they was like yeah, we gotta study first and then after they get the studying out of the way, they could kick it and wouldn’t have to worry about it later on. That’s basically what I’ll do if I get to college on a big campus. I mean studying comes before socializing.”
- “Well, I thought making friends with people was my first priority, freshman and sophomore year after school, I would be at friends’ houses and we would just talk until 6:00 p.m. And I would go home and I would rush and do work so that I could watch TV or something like that and I wasn’t like take a lot of time, but now I’m adjusting now, and so it’s like not as important as it used to be.”
- “If you hang with people who want to do good in life, who is not doing drugs, or having sex and things, most likely you are going to succeed. If you are hanging with people who don’t care about their schoolwork and so are popular and are in the in-crowd, it doesn’t because they are still going to be popular. But, if you hang with people who do their homework, you’re going to try to yeah, I’m going to be smart, so I’m going to get good grades like my friends so that’s probably our motivation.”
- “Too much socialization. Talking to everybody. Wanting to be around girls and thinking about having money, smoking and drinking and going to parties. A lot of stuff that was distracting me. Instead of saying, okay, well I’m gonna go to this party later and I’m gonna do my work now.”

As discussed in detail on pages fifty-two through fifty-seven, the students in the sample do not endorse encounter as a status in the BRIAS. The following quotation shows that “acting white” does not seem to influence their academic performance:

Acting White/Racelessness

- “I’ve definitely heard it, kind of like not expected it, but kind of like expected some people to be like that. It hasn’t really bothered me. I haven’t had a problem with it. But some people just don’t know any better, but it’s sad, but I can’t do anything about that. It’s not my problem.”

The AAST’s fourth hypothesis seeks to ascertain the degree to which students know about and access academic support services available to them:

Hypothesis Four: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and who do utilize academic support services at the school and in the school community.

The following quotation reflects the repetitive and limited commentary which students in the sample offered on school support services:

- “I joke about my assignment notebook being my brain. There’s a lot of information that I just can’t keep in my head, so I have to write it down. And so before a week starts, I open my assignment notebook and I’ve already written out the long-term things—oh, I’ve got a paper due Wednesday, I’ve got a test Thursday-Friday.”

The AAST’s fifth hypothesis seeks to ascertain the degree to which students’ academic achievement is enhanced by strong and supportive relationships with adults in the school:

Hypothesis Five: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who experience strongly supportive interactions with key classroom teachers and dean counselors.

The development of positive student and teacher relationships is often cited as a key component of student academic success and as a core component of schooling (Ferguson 5). African American students who are academically successful report positive interactions and relationships with their teachers. Those who experience strong and supportive interactions with key classroom teachers and dean counselors note both the importance of building relationships with faculty and staff as well as the significance of these relationships on their academic achievement. Furthermore, African American students who do well in school often identify with and emulate teachers who they “look up to” and don’t want to “let down.” The responsibility that students take in maintaining such relationships by not disappointing teachers provides them with a set of standards to monitor continuously their role as students. In this way, students receive sustained support and encouragement from their adult role models and academic support in the school.

- “I would say a lot of my relationships with my teachers are good. Most of them are positive, come from outside of the classroom. I know a lot of my teachers through extracurricular activities, other activities that I’m involved in school. So if I have

occasion to actually be in their class, there's already a relationship there. With other teachers that I don't see in an extracurricular setting, a lot of times, I'm just in their room. 'You know what Mr. or Mrs. So and So, I don't understand this.' And when I have questions, that's why I'm, you know, 'I don't understand number three;' 'What'd you do this weekend?'— you know that kind of rapport. But a lot of it comes from outside of the classroom.”

- “Yeah, actually my [sport] coach [name], he's always been proud of anything that I do. He lives in the Oak Park area and so he reads the Oak Park papers and he sees me in them and in the hallways and congratulates me. Where other teachers notice it, but they may not mention it, but he always makes sure that I know that he's proud. That's very encouraging.”
- “Ms. [name of teacher], she was like very quiet and gentle. She was more like a grandmother teaching you and she was just very nice in the beginning, you see ... She was--and she told us, you have to pay attention to each and every lesson because it's not like you go on. You move on; each lesson is like a domino effect.”
- “I could really talk with her and get help with math and she always gave me the feeling that if I really wanted to do this or if I wanted to succeed, then I can, you know, and I can do anything that I wanted to. She really helped out with that, and I just loved going to talk to her because she just always had a good word or something good to say, and actually I still keep in touch with her now, even though she's not a teacher here.”
- “He's very open, but that's not the word I'm looking for. He involves his students. He talks to his students like he would talk to just about anybody else. He involves students in things that go on in his life. He knows that we're not always going to enjoy everything that we're doing, but he says you have to do it anyway. What other choice do you have? You can do it or you can fail. He's a very nice man. He's very open and candid about what he tells you. If he thinks about something that you do is good, he'll let you know. He'll say like you're good at this, but if there is something else you didn't do good on, he'll say this sucks, you know. He'll be honest with you, and while honesty can be good, like sometimes, you don't always want to get brutal honesty.”

Most African American students at OPRFHS care about their academic achievement. They seek out teachers and other adult role models for academic support and encouragement.

- “But, for things like essays, basically, I just try to get what the teacher wants from me, ask them what they want, how the test is going to be formatted, or how the essay should be completed. And then I go from what they say.”
- “A lot of other students, like older students, my older sister, whoever I was looking at, they did that and they told me it's a good idea. Some teachers, especially the better ones, welcome students to come at certain times, and they give you specific times that's more convenient for them and they encourage us to come. Just from personal experience, I found it to be the best thing to do. And, of course, my parents tell me I should do things like that. But a lot of it is just experience.”

Students in the sample also candidly talked about their negative experiences with teachers. Their comments focused on both their discomfort with such teachers as well as their perception of these teachers as uncaring about their students in general.

- “I just didn't feel comfortable there. I didn't really talk to her. I think I tried once but, I don't know, I didn't feel that comfortable. I don't think she really has that personality that you just go up and ask her a question.”
- “You know, she was just, sometimes she would just be mad for no reason. Nobody would do anything wrong. You know, she just be snapping to be snapping.”
- “Like some teachers I know really do not care about their students. I hate to say this about teachers, but some of them, I know just really don't. Like they, if they think the student is a trouble maker or bad, they'll more than likely just write the student off.”

Finally, students in the sample referred to their relationships with their dean counselors. Their comments reflected experiences similar to their experiences with teachers.

- “But my dean [counselor] has so many other kids. I don't expect her to like push me as hard as a teacher who sees me everyday would. I really like my dean, though.”
- “You know, looking back, I feel like she could have did more, especially when I was having trouble sophomore year, you know.”
- “It was only when we would pick classes. It increased a little more when it was senior year when it was around going to college and he wanted me to consider a four- year institution, but I wanted to just start off with the junior college at Triton, 'cause it was near and it was cheaper.”
- “And he really inspired me because, you know, at the beginning of the year, he's like, ‘You gotta buckle down this year to get out.’”

The AAST's sixth and final hypothesis seeks to ascertain the degree to which students who have successfully negotiated the triple quandary experience academic success:

Hypothesis Six: The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary. The triple quandary consists of the following theoretical constructs:

- a) The mainstream [White] culture
- b) The minority experience
- c) The Black cultural experience

African American students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary are more likely to:

- **Develop peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class, and gender boundaries;**
- **Participate in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities;**
- **Develop coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies between mainstream [White] values and their home and community values;**
- **Internalize only those mainstream [White] values that they define as necessary for their academic achievement.**

The Mainstream [White] Culture

A distinguishable fraction of African American students in the sample, some of whom were in the internalized non-negotiated stream, challenged the relevance and the applicability of the content of the

school's curriculum to their lives and career opportunities. Voices in this fraction of the sample often cited curricular reading materials which they perceived as personally disconnected from their individual experiences as well as unrelated to the experience of being Black in America. Both their affective and cognitive/intellectual reactions seemed to emanate from these students' collective need for curricular materials which were integral both to their everyday lives and to their academic experiences. While this representative group did not indicate rejection of the mainstream [White] culture, they seemed to express the necessity for inclusion in the curriculum of both lessons and examples which embraced more consistently and more fully the Black experience in the learning community:

- "Maybe the books that the school won't let us read. There are a lot of ethnic books about Africa and what really happened between the trading and all that. I am really interested in that. I don't see any books on that. The Young Chicago Authors, this girl I know named Lauren, she carries those books around. She showed one of them to me and, kinda just, like how come this is not at school. They taught them stuff that they just wanted to know, and we kept reading stuff that we should learn."
- "I ain't trying to disappoint my family. I want to be able to achieve in school and get good grades and stuff, but there is a part of me that is saying, the hell with it, if I have to do all this work and still get nowhere. It's like having a dead end job, not going anywhere, and having to do so much and getting nothing out of it."
- "I don't think that I can remember back ... I think we were doing like the little short stories or like the plays and stuff like that we had to read, like most of Shakespeare's work. Like I can't really understand what was said and I can't really get into it. And if I can't get into it, I can't really focus on it. So, I think that's what that was. I like to read and I like a lot of books. I like one of Shakespeare's stories, was *Romeo and Juliet*, but *Julius Caesar*, I can't really catch what they are saying or what they are doing. In his sentences, he puts the verb before the noun and when we talk, we put the noun before the verb. So it's sort of backwards. So, I think that's pretty much what it was."

The Minority Experience

Most Black students negotiate a set of stereotypes in the learning community at OPRFHS. Many see fellow African American students who perpetuate these stereotypes through actions which reinforce a group stigma. Thus, African American students perceive that they are not treated as individuals in the learning community but rather that they are viewed as a group with generalized deficits. When African American students are treated as a group, their unique and individual differences are not sought after and nurtured by some members of the learning community. In those cases when students and adults note a particular African American student's academic qualities, values and assets on an individual basis, that student's behavior and/or attitudes are often interpreted as "You're different from the rest," i.e., "You're not like one of them." Such subtle but penetrating messages and images in the learning community at OPRFHS are detrimental to the life chances of all students, and in particular, to African American students living in a diverse society.

- “I believe as a people that African Americans that are doing wrong, that are showing that they’re ignorant, knowing that we’re not and basically showing the Whites here that we are nothing and that we can’t achieve anything, that we are ignorant as the stereotypes are, and it gets me angry to see that because now you’re just proving our stereotype. And that’s not right because I’m not one of the those stereotypes.”

The impact of the minority experience on students and adults is important to investigate and to understand.

The Black Cultural Experience

Knowing and attempting to understand each student’s assets and accepting the whole student require a willingness to believe that affective and cognitive processes are integrally interwoven in the fabric of all students. Belief in the interdependency between affective and cognitive processes is at the core of a relationship model. One student’s comment, “It’s not always the ‘academic’ that make the student,” is a way of saying that the learning community at OPRFHS should do much more than simply assess the academic skills of students. Creating a caring and compassionate environment in which all human beings and their differences are embraced is central to any culture of academic achievement. Another student’s statement that “Students got to make academics to make his grades” not only connotes the affective side of the student as an individual but also highlights that one’s feelings about self and others play a vital role in academic achievement. In our sample, African American students who endorse the internalized negotiated success stream have higher GPAs than those who do not. This correlation suggests that these students consciously nurture their affective and cognitive development in knowledge, skills and assets to achieve academically in the learning community at OPRFHS.

- “As far as being good, I could say that there is some teachers in this school who care about their students more than their academics. Because some teachers would just think about, oh well, his academics are low so something is probably wrong with him. But then again, you got other teachers that is like okay, well, let me see what’s wrong with the student and see why his academics are low or he’s not doing good. There are some teachers here that actually want to see what’s wrong with the student before the academics because it’s not always the academics that make the student. The student got to make academics to make his grades and stuff.”

African American students in the sample who recognize ways to manage, cope and negotiate the triple quandary are academically successful. They are conscious of the images and the subtle messages of their group; they develop strategies from their family and community to successfully negotiate mainstream [White] and minority experiences in the learning community at OPRFHS. When unsuccessfully negotiated, these two experiences can limit the academic achievement of African American students in the learning community. African American students who successfully negotiate the triple quandary are more likely to:

1. *Develop peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class, and gender boundaries --*
 - “But, you know, I grew up around--from the time, as long as I can remember until eighth grade--I was the only African American student in my class. So that makes--it makes it a lot easier because a lot of the programs are predominantly White and a lot of Black people are scared to step out of their racial boundaries and, you know, explore other people, other cultures, you know, things that they're afraid of or whatever. So the fact that I have been raised around different races made it a lot easier.”

2. *Participate in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities --*
 - “Tennis is just a passion. I always loved sports and both volleyball and basketball, but I'm very short. So since my parents had me take tennis lessons when I was younger and they enjoyed it that was kind of a natural decision. And one of the things I appreciate about that is it's a way for me to meet different people because BOSS, of course, is all African American students and then tennis is predominantly White, and so a lot of my White friends came from here.”

3. *Develop coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies with mainstream [White] values and their home and community values - -*
 - “It's funny, because as the acceptances started coming in, you know, I didn't tell people because of the well, you know, if I got in and other people didn't, I don't want them to be awkward about it. I just--if it comes up, we'll talk about it, but I'm not going to bring it up. So every morning, she'd [mother] asked me, 'Did you get any college news?' And I'm like, 'Okay, well, I got into Harvard.' And she physically hit me. She'd be like, 'Are you kidding me? Why aren't you more excited?' And she would be ten times more excited than I was and just that kind of support really helped.”

4. *Internalize only those mainstream [White] values which they define as necessary for their academic achievement –*
 - “I am not saying all higher learning is all bad, I mean, something's it's like mandatory for life but it's like right now ... now is to be a six or seven page essay about somebody else's life. I don't have no idea what it's about. I mean I heard about Edgar Allen Poe, but I'm not so into his life that I just want to write about him. I mean give me something else that will help me out later on in life and not just put me in a classroom where I just sit down and listen to somebody.”

Summary

Several aspects of the research process enabled the AAST to realize the goals of the study. The six hypotheses effectively guided the AAST in probing the lived experiences of African American students at OPRFHS. The use of the BRIAS with secondary level students was affirmed because it revealed a bi-modal population of African American students at OPRFHS -- the internalized negotiated success stream and the internalized non-negotiated stream. The former realized academic success while the latter did not. Students' quotations subsequently provided the AAST with deep understanding of the multiple ways in which African American students perceived and experienced the school. For some

students, the complexity of climate and safety issues was difficult to navigate. Others who found this complexity less difficult to navigate were students who were involved in extracurricular activities. And still others who experienced the least difficulty with navigating the complexity of school climate and safety issues were students who had prior contact or involvement with the school itself, possibly through a sibling or relative who was previously enrolled at OPRFHS.

The AAST also learned that African American students benefited from parental support which was positive and straightforward in terms of providing resources in the home and of being engaged with the school in significant ways. Both underscored the importance of parental investment in academic achievement. Another important aspect of the lives of students in the sample involved their keen awareness of the roles which their peers play in their academic experience. During their interviews, students repeatedly showed that they were sensitive to and savvy about peers with whom they should either associate or disassociate as well as about the need to keep peer activities aligned with academic activities and expectations. When the interviews turned to the use of school support services, most students in the sample consistently offered limited commentary other than brief references to their daily planner.

Conversely, students in the sample talked extensively about their awareness of the importance of building positive relationships with teachers, dean counselors and other adults. The text for these sections of the interviews was rich; it resonated with heartfelt emotions which emphasized the salutary effects on a student's academic experience and academic well-being when adults demonstrated their concern about each individual student's academic performance. Some students in the sample supported this hypothesis by describing negative relationships with teachers and limited interactions with dean counselors which contributed to student feelings of being placed on the perimeter rather than at the core of the learning community.

Also rich in text were interviewed students' statements related to the sixth hypothesis. Especially significant for the AAST was the emergence of a fourth status which extended the triple quandary. A group of students in the sample revealed that they were conscious of their own identities as well as of the identities of others. Furthermore, these students showed that they had acquired skills to negotiate each status of the triple quandary but that no status validated their own experience. Thus, a fourth status or stream that was bi-modal became evident: the internalized negotiated success stream and the internalized non-negotiated stream. Students in the former showed that they had successfully

- Developed peer relationships across racial, ethnic, class and gender boundaries;
- Participated in homogeneous and heterogeneous extracurricular activities;
- Developed coping strategies to overcome inconsistencies with mainstream [White] values and their home and community values;

- Internalized only those mainstream [White] values which they defined as necessary for their academic achievement.

The identification of a fourth academic success stream is a critical finding. It suggests the need to develop further opportunities in the OPRFHS learning community that embrace and encourage African American students to take advantage of a full range of curricular and extracurricular programs without compromising either their own identity or the identity of others. The programs must allow for the full expression of multiple student identities without valorizing one identity, i.e., mainstream [White], over all others in those situations where African Americans excel--the fourth success stream.

**EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT
OF THE DISCIPLINE SYSTEM**

The discipline system is based on the OPRFHS *Code of Conduct* and is implemented and enforced by three deans of discipline (see appendix K). Since 1992, efforts have been made to analyze discipline data by race and gender. The data show that patterns in student disciplinary infractions have remained constant throughout the past ten years in one critical area: African American students are more likely to be referred to the discipline system than are White students.

Table 39. Discipline Record For Black Students: 1992-2001, Selected Intervals

Semester	Blacks as Percent of Student Population	Black Percent of Total Student Infractions	Black Percent of Total Student Infractions
Fall 1992	27.1	54	57
Fall 1996	29.3	61.4	43.9
Fall 2001	25.2	60.4	53.4

The AAST has very recently reviewed disciplinary data for three consecutive school years from 1999 until 2002. The data for these years show statistically significant differences in mean weighted GPA and discipline infractions for Black and White female and male students. The data show that Black and White students who violate the code of conduct through behavioral infractions which warrant disciplinary action tend to have lower mean weighted GPAs than those students who are not involved in the discipline system. The data generally show that students with lower mean weighted GPAs tend to commit more serious disciplinary infractions (see tables 40 and 42).

In table 40, the differences in mean weighted GPA for White female and male students are statistically significant ($p < .05$). Whereas the mean weighted GPAs for White females and males with no disciplinary records are 3.71 and 3.28, respectively, the weighted GPAs for females and males with in-school suspensions (ISS) and multiple ISS or after-school suspensions (ASP) are 2.02 and 1.80, respectively. The mean weighted GPA for White females who have out-of-school suspensions (OSS) and multiple OSS is 1.34, surprisingly different from that of White males (2.80). Out-of-school suspensions typically have a severe impact on academic achievement because students are removed from school during their suspensions. Further examination of White male student discipline data revealed that a few had very high weighted GPAs when they committed infractions that resulted in out-of-school suspensions. The high weighted GPAs of these few students accounted for the relatively high mean weighted GPA for White male students with out-of-school suspensions.

Table 40. Discipline Record and Mean Weighted GPA for White Female and Male Students, Classes of 2000, 2001 and 2002 (p < .05)

Discipline Record 2000-2001	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
No discipline record	F	3.71	525	.760195	.033178
	M	3.28	426	.838478	.040624
	Total	3.52	951	.824097	.026723
Warning	F	2.89	30	.858352	.156713
	M	2.81	52	.841936	.116756
	Total	2.84	82	.843596	.093160
Detention	F	2.89	44	.906954	.136728
	M	2.76	83	.798099	.087603
	Total	2.81	127	.835850	.074170
Single ISS or ASP	F	2.67	30	.823096	.150276
	M	2.37	47	.663983	.096852
	Total	2.49	77	.739217	.084242
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	F	2.02	19	.691363	.158610
	M	1.80	33	.724374	.126097
	Total	1.88	52	.713819	.098989
OSS or Multiple OSS	F	1.34	1		
	M	2.80	6	.810641	.330943
	Total	2.59	7	.923749	.349144
Total	F	3.52	649	.884279	.034711
	M	3.03	647	.909484	.035755
	Total	3.28	1296	.928972	.025805

Table 41. Correlation Between Mean, Weighted GPA and Discipline Record For White Females; 2000-2001

WHITE FEMALES		Weighted GPA	Discipline Record
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.471**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	649	649
Discipline Record	Pearson Correlation	-.471**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	649	651

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 42. Correlation Between Mean Weighted GPA and Discipline Record for White Males; 2000-2001

WHITE MALES		Weighted GPA	Discipline Record
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	647	647
Discipline Record	Pearson Correlation	-.423**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	647	648

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In table 43, the mean weighted GPAs for Black females and males with no disciplinary records are 2.78 and 2.34, respectively. The mean weighted GPAs of Black female and male students who receive warnings from the discipline system are 2.47 (female) and 2.26 (male). For those who receive detentions, the mean weighted GPAs are 2.09 (female) and 1.95 (male). Finally, Black female and male students who receive single in-school suspensions (ISS) or after-school suspensions (ASP) have mean weighted GPAs of 1.97 (female) and 1.79 (male). In all cases, Black males who encounter the discipline system have the lowest mean weighted GPA. Black males who receive multiple in-school suspensions (ISS) or after-school suspensions (ASP) have a mean weighted GPA of 1.45 compared to their Black female counterparts' mean weighted GPA of 1.75. The differences in mean weighted GPAs are statistically significant for Black female and male students.

Table 43. Discipline Record and Mean Weighted GPA for Black Female and Male Students, Classes of 2000, 2001 and 2002 ($p < .05$)

Discipline Record 2000-2001	Gender	Mean Weighted GPA	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean
No discipline record	F	2.78	134	.826340	.071385
	M	2.34	99	.910348	.091493
	Total	2.60	233	.884825	.057967
Warning	F	2.47	18	.720438	.169809
	M	2.26	19	.531024	.121825
	Total	2.36	37	.629574	.103501
Detention	F	2.09	51	.558305	.078178
	M	1.95	50	.608225	.086016
	Total	2.01	101	.583318	.058042
Single ISS or ASP	F	1.97	19	.694762	.159389
	M	1.79	32	.592900	.104811
	Total	1.85	51	.632101	.088512
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	F	1.75	15	.641298	.165582
	M	1.45	49	.635801	.090829
	Total	1.53	64	.644486	.080561
OSS or Multiple OSS	F	1.98	12	.382726	.110484
	M	1.76	9	.726813	.242271
	Total	1.89	21	.551622	.120374
Total	F	2.49	249	.821348	.052051
	M	2.01	258	.813267	.050632
	Total	2.22	507	.844783	.037518

Table 44. Correlation Between Mean Weighted GPA and Discipline Record For Black Females; 2000-2001

BLACK FEMALES		Weighted GPA	Discipline Record
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.434**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	249	249
Discipline Record	Pearson Correlation	-.434**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	249	252

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 45. Correlation Between Mean Weighted GPA and Discipline Record for Black Males; 2000-2001

BLACK MALES		Weighted GPA	Discipline Record
Weighted GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.471**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	649	649
Discipline Record	Pearson Correlation	-.471**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	649	651

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Concerned about these alarming discrepancies, the AAST sought plausible explanations for the troubling relationship between mean weighted GPAs and severity of disciplinary infractions for Black female and male students. An inquiry began by ranking the data into the top five reasons for disciplinary action during the three-year period. The top five disciplinary infractions in each year involved physical or verbal misconduct (i.e., verbal abuse, fighting, defiance and aggressive physical behavior) for both Black females and males. Disciplinary infractions for White female and male students tended to be less physical (i.e., smoking, truancy, beeper possession, failure to serve ASP or verbal abuse). Even though White males showed aggressive behavior in each year, the frequency of this disciplinary infraction was lower than their Black male counterparts (see table 46). While the number of referrals showed dramatic increase from 1999-2000 to 2000-2001 and then a decrease from 2000-2001 to 2001-2002, the patterns of discipline referral reasons remained relatively static for all four groups over this three-year period.

Table 46. Trend and Frequency Data for Top Five Infractions of the Code of Conduct for White and Black Females and Males, 1999-2002

1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
White Female		
Smoking (26)	Smoking (36)	Smoking (19)
Truancy (12)	Truancy (12)	Beeper Possession (9)
Verbal Abuse (9)	Failure to Serve ASP (14)	Verbal Abuse (4)
Attendance (6)	Attendance (10)	Alcohol/Drugs (3)
Beeper Possession (6)	Failure to Serve Detention (FSD) (10)	FSD (2), ASP (2), Fighting (2)
Alcohol/Drugs (6)		Left School w/o Permission (2), Weapon (2)
White Male		
Smoking (33)	Smoking (48)	FSD (40)
Failure to Serve ASP (24)	Verbal Abuse (37)	Smoking (30)
Aggressive Physical Behavior (20)	FSD (33)	Verbal Abuse (28)
Defiance (18)	Defiance (30)	Failure to Serve ASP (23)
Verbal Abuse (17)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (24)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (23)
Black Female		
Verbal Abuse (22)	FSD (25)	FSD (22)
Fighting (18)	Verbal Abuse (20)	Verbal Abuse (19)
Defiance (16)	Gross Misconduct (18)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (17)
Failure to Serve ASP (15)	Defiance (14), Fighting (14),	Fighting (15)
Truancy (11)	Failure to Serve ASP (14)	Failure to Serve ASP (13)
Black Male		
Verbal Abuse (73)	Defiance (111)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (76)
Defiance (71)	Aggressive Behavior (107)	Verbal Abuse (53)
Failure to Serve ASP (54)	Verbal Abuse (93)	FSD (46)
Aggressive Behavior (50)	FSD (69)	Failure to Serve ASP (44)
FSD (35)	Disruptive (58)	Defiance (36)

Additionally, the AAST reviewed the written comments of deans of discipline, faculty and staff when they reported disciplinary infractions for both Black and White students. There appeared to be greater detail and specificity in recorded descriptions of Black student misconduct than in recorded descriptions of White student misconduct. The need to describe more accurately Black student physical misconduct was perhaps necessary to ensure accuracy and to avoid appearances of racism or stereotyping.

One of the goals of the discipline system is to reduce student misconduct at the high school. Deans of discipline report that when they receive notification from faculty or staff about a student's misconduct, they meet with the student to determine the reasons for the infraction and to counsel the student on ways in which he/she can change or modify his/her behavior to avoid future involvement in the discipline system. The primary strategy used by the deans of discipline is intended to remediate through counseling and specified consequences for disciplinary infractions. Deans of discipline also attempt to follow-up

with faculty and staff on the disciplinary decisions made for each student referred to the discipline system. Deans of discipline readily explain that follow-up with faculty and staff on such disciplinary decisions is, however, not as consistent as they would like it to be because of time constraints related to a variety of circumstances such as the schedules of parties involved or the time required for the investigative process itself.

The discipline system's primary strategy is intended to serve as a deterrent to ongoing and future misconduct. Yet, because the same top five reasons for disciplinary action persisted across the three-year period and the frequencies of their occurrences did not change dramatically, the data seem to suggest that the primary strategy for disciplinary misconduct is perhaps ineffective as a deterrent. The 2000-2001 year for freshman Black males was indicative of this pattern. Freshman Black males not only had the highest number of disciplinary infractions, but they were also suspended more than any other group at the high school during that school year. Consequently, the AAST tracked this freshman Black male group to determine the impact of the discipline system both on their ongoing conduct and on the existence and the effectiveness of any intervention and prevention strategies used to target this troubled group. Because Black males are more likely than their White male counterparts to encounter the OPRFHS discipline system, data about developing, testing and implementing non-punitive interventions to reduce the prevalence of Black males' falling into this system are critically needed.

Table 47 shows that freshman Black males involved in the discipline system had an occurrence rate of 2.76 suspensions per student during the 2000-2001 school year. Their total suspensions (113) almost doubled the total suspensions for Black sophomores (59) and for Black juniors (57) during this same year. Fourteen of the forty-one freshmen involved were recidivists. While twenty-seven students from the freshman group appear to be non-recidivists, many of them are no longer enrolled at OPRFHS. Moreover, the recidivist rate for Black sophomores (11 of 24) and for Black juniors (15 of 30) was higher. However, the suspension rate for the recidivist freshmen (now sophomores) was 2.79 compared to 2.55 for recidivist sophomores (now juniors) and 1.73 for recidivist juniors (now seniors). Thus, approximately one-third of freshman Black males involved in the discipline system continued to commit disciplinary infractions as sophomores and were suspended a total of thirty-nine times during 2001-2002 compared to twenty-eight times for junior recidivists and to twenty-six times for senior recidivists. Finally, although it appears that the mean weighted GPA of non-recidivist sophomores (1.75) is higher than that of recidivist sophomores (1.55), there is no statistically significant difference between these two means.

Table 47. Mean and Total Suspensions by Black Male Students and Recidivism Status for Black Male Students, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002

Year 2 Sem. 2	Year 3 Sem. 1	Recidivism Status	Number of Students	Total Susp. Year 2 Sem. 2	Susp. Rate Year 2 Sem. 2	Total Susp. Year 3 Sem. 1	Susp. Rate Year 3 Sem. 1	Mean GPA Year 3 Sem. 1
Total			41	113	2.76			
9th Grade		No	27	72	2.67			1.75
	10th Grade	Yes	14	41	2.93	39	2.79	1.55
Total			24	59	2.46			
10th Grade		No	13	34	2.62			1.53
	11th Grade	Yes	11	25	2.27	28	2.55	1.66
Total			30	57	1.90			
11th Grade		No	15	24	1.60			1.68
	12th Grade	Yes	15	33	2.20	26	1.73	1.48

The data suggest an opportunity to learn from the differential responses of African American male recidivist students to the primary strategy of the discipline system. Because recidivist students in this freshman class did not respond to the primary strategy, questions surfaced regarding the discipline system. Should the system seek to use preventive and remedial interventions or should it issue increasingly more severe punishments? The AAST proposes the former. We cannot endorse any discipline system which utilizes as its primary strategy the control, containment, coercion and expulsion of Black male students. The AAST suggests that a school's discipline system develop behavioral modification and remediation strategies that prevent, reduce and eliminate recidivism.

It is well known that Black males are disproportionately over-represented in our nation's criminal justice system. Also well known is the fact that those Black males who are on probation in this system are disenfranchised in most states. Thus, these individuals have been "cut-out" from participating in society--socially, emotionally, and politically. Furthermore, stereotypes of aggressive and promiscuous behaviors which are frequently associated with Black males are known in every institution in the United States. Such conditions tend to affirm a self-fulfilling prophecy that is in place in our society. The AAST believes that OPRFHS must maximize its efforts to prevent its Black male students from realizing this self-fulfilling prophecy in their young lives.

The problem of recidivism for African American males remains at OPRFHS. Recidivist freshmen appear to be unresponsive to the primary strategy of remedial counseling and specific consequences for

disciplinary infractions. This current strategy needs to be augmented with an authentic and concentrated effort that more effectively and more systemically addresses students who repeat disciplinary infractions and do not change behaviors that are violations of the code of conduct. Such concerted and wholehearted efforts need to be made so that students at risk of recidivism will acquire skills and attitudes which enable them to negotiate and to live successfully within the “rules of the game” both at the high school and in society. The goal of the learning community must be to place all students, especially African American males, at academic promise.

The deans of discipline shared with the AAST a list of seventeen Pupil Support Services’ (PSS) interventions that are currently in place for the purpose of curbing not only the total number of all students but also the disproportionate number of African American students involved in the discipline system. Despite these well-intentioned initiatives, none deals exclusively with African American males, the most endangered group in the discipline system at OPRFHS and in the criminal justice system of our society. Disciplinary interventions must be developed, implemented and assessed by the learning community which proactively addresses this serious situation.

IMPLICATION OF FINDINGS

Throughout the entire process of the research study, the AAST employed an action research framework to share its ongoing analyses and interpretations of data with school administrators, faculty and staff as well as with the Board of Education. Data related to the learning community performance gap was reviewed to examine past and current trends in academic achievement in the high school. The action research framework included opportunities to investigate and reflect on past, present and future efforts to reduce the learning community performance gap. Thus, the AAST's action research framework provided consistent evidence to administrators, faculty, staff and the Board of Education to support the school's ongoing efforts to design, implement and assess programs intended to reduce the learning community performance gap.

Institutionalizing Systemic Staff Development.

As the AAST uncovered both quantitative and qualitative evidence to test and to support the six hypotheses, the necessity of action research projects to discover appropriate strategies that would meet the needs of academically unsuccessful students became clearly apparent. For example, if lack of parental support was contributing to a student's under-achievement, programs which enabled such parents to provide appropriate levels of support needed to be developed, implemented and tested for effectiveness. A common standard which was established to apply to all new programs and interventions was that all phases of their development, implementation and measurement be evidence-based.

As the AAST's process of research and inquiry continued, several important factors which were negatively affecting the achievement of certain groups of students became evident. In some cases, parents of such students were either unable or unwilling to do those things that would contribute to the likelihood of their child's academic success: maintain ongoing contact with teachers and dean-counselors; regularly monitor the level of their child's effort; attend parent meetings at the school. Although most parents did those things which reflected their investment in their student's academic success, the school was nevertheless responsible for finding ways to engage non-participating parents so that they too would become active partners with the school in their child's educational experience. As a result, the **Partnering with Parents Action Research Learning Team** was created.

The interview process of the research study enabled the AAST to hear stories from many students who sincerely believed themselves to be academically successful during their junior high/middle school years. Yet, these students noted that "something happened" when they entered the high school. One student stated it without equivocation: "I just got blown away!" This statement as well as the recorded statements of many others indicated that the school should not continue to allow incoming freshmen to be

caught so completely off-guard. The high school and its sender schools must work together to better prepare students for academic and behavioral expectations as well as for the routines of OPRFHS. To address these issues, the **Successful Transitions to High School Action Research Learning Team** was formed.

The data also supported the belief that the more a student was involved in the school's discipline system, the more likely that student would not achieve academic success. A study of the discipline system also revealed that for many unsuccessful students, severe discipline problems grew out of more minor infractions which occurred early in their high school experience. Had early minor infractions been handled in more effective manners -- manners which would address the improvement of behavior and the building of positive relationships rather than the imposition of punishments, these students might not have become involved in more serious infractions resulting in more severe consequences. Teachers need assistance in acquiring research-based classroom management techniques which will enable them to help their students avoid the school's discipline system. Thus, the **Discipline Without Alienation Action Research Learning Team** was created.

The positive correlation between reading scores on standardized tests and overall academic achievement should not surprise educators, parents or community members. The lack of grade-appropriate reading skills negatively affects a student's ability to succeed in all disciplines. High school reading specialists recognize the difficulty of improving reading skills of students at adolescent stages of development in stand-alone remedial contexts. They also realize that the likelihood for significant improvement surfaces when the development of reading skills is integrated with each discipline in which students are enrolled. Previous efforts of the established **Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC)** initiative were expanded into the work of an **Action Research Learning Team** which now targets all disciplines in the school.

During the interview component of the research study, successful students often spontaneously named teachers who positively influenced their level of achievement, teachers with whom they were able "to connect." Academically unsuccessful students typically found it difficult to identify teachers who had truly made a difference in their high school experience. Additional strategies which enable teachers to build positive relationships with all students need to become a daily focus of each teacher's classroom. Thus began the **Tripod Project Action Research Learning Team**. Its members are participating in the student-teacher relationship study which is currently being developed, implemented and assessed under the direction of Ronald F. Ferguson, Ph.D., of Harvard University. Several other schools in the Minority Student Achievement Network are also involved in this initiative.

Finally, A. Wade Boykin, Ph.D., of Howard University and of The Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk (CRESPAR) strongly influenced the work of the AAST.

Boykin's Talent Development Model offers great potential for positively affecting the elimination of the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. This model challenges educators to focus on student assets through communal, cooperative and constructivist learning activities that promote active task engagement as well as a sense of community and belonging in all students. Members of the **Talent Development Model Action Research Learning Team** are employing techniques which emanate from the model's theories and are measuring the effectiveness of the strategies in reducing the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS.

Each learning team is developing an evidence-based framework to plan, implement, assess, evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of each strategy and of the framework itself. Projects and initiatives of these learning teams which have demonstrated positive differences for students through evidence-based data analysis will evolve into a 2003-2004 all-school staff development program.

Formation of the OPRFHS African American Faculty Advisory Council

In February 2002, African American members of the AAST met with the OPRFHS African American faculty to discuss the results of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) school climate survey which was administered in May 2001. The purpose of the meeting was to interrogate why the survey responses of African American faculty were significantly different from those of their White faculty counterparts. For example, the responses of African American faculty to items which focused on student-teacher relationships were almost always less positive than those of their White counterparts; that is, they tended to move toward disagree on items such as "Teachers in this school like their students" or "Teachers are fair to students" or "Teachers give students the grades they deserve." For school security and maintenance items on the survey, the responses of African American faculty were also significantly different from their White counterparts as evidenced by the less affirmative responses of African American faculty to items such as "Students usually feel safe in the school building" or "Teachers and workers feel safe in the building before and after school."

After the AAST presented school climate results to African American faculty in attendance at the February meeting, many participants reflected on these differences by describing observed discrepancies in how faculty and staff treated students in hallways and classrooms. Most felt that African American faculty and staff were less tolerant of aberrant behavior in classrooms and hallways and intervened more frequently and more assertively. African American faculty perceived that their involvement and intervention in students' aberrant behavior was different from that of White faculty. For example, African American faculty felt that White faculty were more lenient in dealing with instances of profanity and disrespect.

Since this first meeting, the AAST has continued to meet with African American faculty to share preliminary findings on the learning community performance gap. The AAST has shared the theories, hypotheses and methods used to measure and test the learning community performance gap. The Talent Development Model and Boykin's theory of the triple quandary were introduced to participants of this group. The sharing by the AAST of these findings as well as of the theoretical and methodological framework led African American faculty to establish the **OPRFHS African American Faculty Advisory Council**.

This Council's mission is to ensure that policies, practices and procedures at OPRFHS reflect one position: "Failure is not an option." Furthermore, the Council seeks to assess, monitor and evaluate the implementation of programs established by the high school to impact the achievement of African American students. Additionally, the Council believes in the collective responsibility of the entire faculty for the achievement of not only African American students but also of all students. The Council supports parent groups and seeks to encourage parents to become pro-actively educated and engaged regarding their rights and available resources and to assist them in being effective partners with OPRFHS in their students' education.

Institutional Funding

The effort and time committed to understanding the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS could not have occurred without institutional support. Prior administrative efforts led to the availability of short-term, competitive grant funds to support not only the work of the AAST but also the development of strategies, initiatives, interventions and programs to reduce the learning community performance gap. This grant funding has sustained both the AAST and the school's efforts over the last three years to examine and explain patterns and trends in the learning community performance gap. However, grant funding will expire at the end of the 2002-2003 school year. Maintaining and sustaining intensive and extensive efforts to reduce the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS require a commitment of permanent institutional funding. The AAST believes that OPRFHS must be an effective school for all students just as it currently is for the majority of its students. Therefore, we recommend that OPRFHS affirm itself as an unfinished "work of art in progress." The teachable moment and the opportunity to learn from what we now know about the learning community performance gap are before us. Oak Park and River Forest High School's mission is to "provide all students a superior education so that they may achieve their full human potential." To achieve the school's mission, permanent institutional resources are needed and ought to be leveraged along with continual efforts to match internal resources with external grant funding.

Evidence-Based Research

The AAST's action research model is reflected in its commitment to disseminate data and to share interpretations of its findings on programs initiated to reduce the OPRFHS learning community performance gap. Evidence-based research quantitatively seeks to be statistically accurate and, wherever possible, to test for statistical significance to determine a program's impact and success in achieving a measurable outcome. Evidence-based research disseminates qualitative data and insights to understand the life experiences of all persons in the OPRFHS learning community. Evidence-based research provides timely feedback to all of the school's stakeholders so that programs and implemented strategies designed to reduce the learning community performance gap can be continuously assessed, evaluated, monitored, changed and redesigned as appropriate.

Ongoing Efforts

Since this research was begun almost two years ago, a number of interventions to close gaps in achievement have been implemented in this district. Since each of these interventions has been in existence for less than two years, a complete analysis of their effectiveness has not been completed. However, during the summer of 2003, such analysis will be conducted and reported on the following intervention programs:

1. Clustering: In an attempt to reduce the feeling of "isolation" among the under-represented members of the Black student population enrolled in honors-level courses, a "clustering" program was introduced in selected honors courses during the 2002-2003 school year. In this program, under-represented Black students enrolled in honors-level courses were scheduled into identified sections of these courses so that their representative population in these identified sections mirrored their representative population in the student school community. As a result of this selective scheduling process, some sections of honors-level courses included 20% to 35% Black students (mirroring the overall Black student population) while other sections had no or virtually no Black students enrolled. This effort was aimed at measuring whether or not such a selective scheduling process would result in increased ongoing Black enrollment in honors-level sections over several years.
2. Project SCHOLAR: During the 2001-2002 school year, funds available from the State of Illinois Gifted Grant were re-directed to a program intended to increase and sustain Black enrollment in honors-level courses in both English and mathematics. For the past two years, students "on the cusp" of the honors-level in these two disciplines were given an extra period of support (provided by honors-level English

and math teachers) intended to enable them to succeed at the honors level and encouraging them to expand their honors-level enrollment in their sophomore year. Sophomores who had “graduated” from the freshman program were offered continued support for an additional year. Twenty-five students, mostly minority, were enrolled in the first year of this program with seventeen opting for continued support. Twenty-eight freshmen (mostly minority) are enrolled in the current year’s freshman program.

3. Learning Support: Created during the 1999-2000 school year, this program is intended to meet the individualized needs of OPRFHS students who have proven themselves to be “academically at-risk” after one or more semesters of attendance at OPRFHS. Identified students meet on a daily basis with Learning Support teachers (cross-disciplinary) who monitor their academic achievement on a weekly basis. Learning Support teachers remain in constant contact with their students, parents, teachers, dean-counselors and support personnel. Students in Learning Support with specialized needs are expected to be referred to appropriate support services by learning support teachers. Learning techniques such as organizational skills, note-taking skills, study skills and commitment to responsibility are expected to be emphasized in learning support sections.
4. Learning Seminar: This program is similar to Learning Support except for the fact that students enrolled in this program are identified as a result of their academic “at-risk” status as eighth graders in community sender middle schools. This program of freshman support for “at-risk” students began in the 2002-2003 school year. The approximately twenty-four students enrolled in the program (all Black freshman males) began to receive services and support during the summer of 2002. Continued support was provided on a daily basis in Learning Seminar groups created on a twelve-to-one student-teacher ratio.

Other programs have been put into place to address the needs of academically “at-risk” students over the past two years: S.O.L.O. (School of Limitless Opportunity); F.R.E.E. (Females Reaching for Educational Excellence); and 4.0 Screening among others. An analysis of all such programs will be conducted during the summer of 2003, with a report being delivered to the Board of Education in August of 2003.

Clearly, OPRFHS is not waiting for the acceptance and implementation of this report to address gaps in achievement. Intervention programs have already been created and their effectiveness or lack thereof will soon be measured.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The learning community performance gap at OPRFHS is a serious one. On all sides of the gap -- from high achievers to low achievers -- there are changes required to challenge and nurture all students toward their full human potential. The AAST believes that evidence-based research in the design, assessment, evaluation, monitoring and redesign of all programs is required to initially reduce and to ultimately eliminate the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. All programs must be evidence-based to ensure the adequate deployment of resources, to measure effort and responsibility and to account for their success or their failure. All evidence-based initiatives must be designed to test, prove and promote long-term interventions and strategies so that all students have the opportunity to achieve their full human potential. It is truly time to think and to act creatively and unconventionally whenever students' assets and students' full human potential across the continuum of academic achievement at OPRFHS are not being fully identified and challenged by the learning community.

The findings in this report speak directly to the promise of evidence-based research. This report unfolds startling and compelling outcomes in the distribution of honors grades of A and B for African American and White students. Moreover, White students with the highest weighted GPAs have a lower correlation between their weighted GPAs and SAT standardized test scores than their African American student counterparts. No matter the group of students, all are affected by the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. The evidence produced in this study and shared in this report has led us to recommend change at OPRFHS -- change that the AAST believes can be positive, collaborative and supportive of all students and the realization of their potential during their high school experience. Thus, with the full and unconditional endorsement of the AAST, this report provides an opportunity for each of us to learn and to do "*Those things that are best*" (the school motto) in the learning community at OPRFHS.

As we move into a new millennium, we cannot afford to replicate conditions of the past which are forever marked by a persistent and a consistent learning community performance gap between the achievement of African American and White students at OPRFHS. A student who does not do well in high school will not have the same life opportunities and choices as those who do well. It is truly unfortunate that so many of those students who fail to succeed academically at OPRFHS are disproportionately African American. The AAST contends that incremental and non-systemic changes without evidence-based criteria can neither sustain nor nurture OPRFHS throughout the twenty-first century. The evidence in this report makes clear that such practices are no longer acceptable. Our task

has been to suggest systemic and programmatic ways to reduce the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS with research and program interventions that are evidence-based.

Most parents in the mainstream [White] community would never tolerate gaps in achievement for their children over such a consistent and lengthy period of time. The same value toward education must be applied to all children if we, as a school and as a nation, are going to forthrightly meet the task of educating children for the twenty-first century. The AAST recommends comprehensive change at OPRFHS because it recognizes the systemic barriers that limit the life chances of African American students. Structural and institutional impediments influence the affective and cognitive status of all people, but especially of those who must negotiate such conditions on a frequent or a daily basis. We are not unconscious of the nation's past. We recognize that a firm commitment to reducing the learning community performance gap involves an extensive and an intensive effort to reveal underlying facts and truths so that we can begin to reduce the gap in achievement between African American and White students in the learning community at OPRFHS.

Recommendations

1. Institutional investment in resources to implement evidence-based research on all existing and all future programs, interventions and reforms that are intended to enhance the achievement of all students at OPRFHS.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and Director of Operations
2. Institutional investment in the 2002-2003 evidence-based staff development action research learning teams. The teams and their focuses include:
The Tripod Project -The focus of this team is to develop strong and positive relationships between students and teachers that enhance opportunities for each student's academic achievement;
The OPRFHS Talent Development Model - The focus of this team is to develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based strategies that are integrated with the subject-matter content, include materials which produce enhanced task engagement, acknowledge and build on student's individual assets, connect to students' cultural and lived experiences and are used in demanding, well-managed and supportive social contexts of high expectations;
Reading Across the Curriculum - The focus of this team is to increase student academic success through the learning and application of literacy strategies in all courses;
Partnerships with Parents - The focus of this team is to develop effective partnerships with all parents, especially parents of African American students, to improve student academic success and close the learning community performance gap;
Discipline without Alienation - The focus of this team is to assist teachers in finding ways to help students improve their classroom behavior and their cooperation levels without alienating students; and
Successful Transitioning to High School - The focus of this team is to improve the transition experience of all incoming freshman with special attention to groups that are most typically placed at risk of failure.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction and Director of Instruction

3. Institutional investment in resources to promote evidence-based research--assessment, evaluation, change and redesign--of all reading improvement programs including Elements of Reading, English 3-4 with Reading Connections, American Literature 1-2 with Reading Connections, Reading Strategies, Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) and all other reading support programs.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and English Division Head

4. Institutional investment in resources to promote evidence-based research--assessment, evaluation, change and redesign--of all basic level mathematics programs including Foundations of Algebra, Integrated Geometry and Algebra, Intermediate Algebra and Applied Mathematics.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Mathematics Division Head

5. Institutional investment in resources to put in place evidence-based systems and processes to maximize the success of all students on the ACT test as predicted by their performance on the PLAN test and to maximize the success of all students on the PLAN test as predicted by their performance on the EXPLORE test.
Responsible school agents: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction and Division Heads

6. Institutional investment in resources to examine and revise (as necessary) the grading philosophy at OPRFHS with a strategic effort to understand the Black and White differences in grade distribution in all courses and levels with particular attention to the honors level.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Division Heads

7. Institutional investment in resources to enable the disciplinary system to investigate ways to determine its effectiveness in reducing student infractions of the OPRFHS *Code of Conduct*. This requires a commitment by the disciplinary system to change and implement effective short and long-term intervention and prevention strategies to reduce student disciplinary infractions. This commitment to change must include the following:
 - d) The establishment of short and long-term research-based intervention and prevention strategies to reduce African American female and male disciplinary infractions;
 - e) The establishment of research-based short and long-term intervention and prevention strategies to reduce African American female and male recidivism rates;
 - f) The establishment of evaluation procedures and methods to measure the effectiveness of all short and long-term preventions and interventions;
 - g) The investigation of ways to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Discipline Without Alienation Learning Team.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services and Deans of Discipline

8. Institutional investment in resources to conduct evidence-based research on all attendance system interventions intended to enhance the academic achievement of all students.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Operations, Attendance Coordinator and Dean Counselors

9. Institutional investment in resources to investigate ways to enhance positive interpersonal relationships between faculty and students. In order to accomplish this, evidence-based efforts should also be made to determine the best student-to-educator ratio to ensure positive and substantive interpersonal relationships and communication in all courses and caseloads.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Instruction, Director of Operations and Division Heads
10. Institutional investment in resources to create a seamless transition from all sender schools (including Districts 90 and 97) by designing a longitudinal research study to track and measure student progress in grade levels six, seven, eight, nine and ten.
Responsible school agents: Boards of Education, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum & Instruction
11. Institutional investment in resources to support continued evidence-based research and to create a local advisory board of parents, teachers, staff, administration and board members from Districts 90, 97 and 200 to collaborate and monitor the academic success of all students.
Responsible school agents: Boards of Education and Superintendents
12. Institutional investment of resources to support the creation and implementation of parent development interventions and workshops to maximize the success of all students with particular focus on African American students.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services, Director of Instruction and Leaders of Parent Organizations
13. Institutional investment of resources to initiate and foster organizations for African American student academic success, development, networking and mentoring.
Responsible school agents: Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services and Activities Director
14. Institutional investment of resources and support for the African American Faculty Advisory Council to monitor, evaluate and assess implementation of programs established to impact the achievement of African American students while affirming the collective responsibility of all faculty for the achievement of African American students.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and African American Faculty
15. Institutional investment of permanent operating and hard-line budget resources to reduce the learning community performance gap. These permanent resources will be matched by outside grant resources to reduce the learning community performance gap at OPRFHS. To achieve outside matching grant resources, a consultant with grant writing skills is required.
Responsible school agents: Board of Education, Superintendent/Principal and Chief Financial Officer

16. Continued philosophical and institutional commitment from the Board of Education and administration in implementing solutions to reduce the learning community performance gap and to create an environment of opportunity for all students as part of its mission to “provide all students a superior education so that they achieve their full human potential.” As part of this commitment, all policy, practices and procedures (e.g., tracking in basic, regular and honors courses; course registration deviations; and weighted GPA) need to be reviewed to determine the impact they have on the learning community performance gap.

Responsible school agents: Board of Education and Superintendent/Principal

17. Institutional investment of resources and support to continue to implement and investigate the effectiveness of intervention programs like Clustering, Project Scholar, Learning Seminar, Learning Support, etc. as meaningful attempts to eliminate all gaps in learning performance.

Responsible school agents: Board of Education and Superintendent/Principal

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APPENDIX A
THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF THE TRIPLE QUANDARY

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

The Triple Quandary

Other scholars have provided variations on the triple quandary (Hale-Benson, 1986; Janna, 1995 Fracas and Grebe, 1990; Duncan, 1995). Researchers who use a triple quandary paradigm have contended that the experience of African American children in schools is more often negative as compared to their White counterparts. Some suggest three ways in which American society has traditionally prevented African American students from receiving the full benefits their education (Janna, 1995):

1. African American students have generally received an inferior education especially at the elementary and secondary levels. Consequently, when they compete for higher education or jobs, they are not successful.
2. African American students are forced to terminate their education sooner than whites primarily because of their earlier educational experiences. As a result, African American students are less likely to achieve levels of education that qualify them for the most desirable occupational roles and wages.
3. African American students who attain educational levels equal to their White counterparts have access to comparable occupations, but their wages are significantly lower than their White counterparts.

The literature affirms that African American students are not only limited by a form of education that undermines their quest to achieve, but they also develop a set of styles and values diametrically opposite of Whites in response to their treatment in schools. Khedival Janna, in *An Observation of the Academic Achievement of African Americans* (1995), suggested that African American students are forced by these circumstances to negotiate their way through the following three realms of experience:

1. They have to deal with the daily facts of Black poverty and oppression.
2. They have to share many of the values of Whites; and
3. They have to maintain a cultural identity that is difficult to reconcile with White values. Schooling in America (Bowles and Gents, 1976) systematically valorized White culture and history and placed African American students in a political and cultural contest that conflicted with their assessment of self and the historical role of African Americans as significant contributors to the growth and development of the United States.

The Role of Gatekeepers

Fracas and Grebe (1990), in Cultural Resources and School Success: Gender, Ethnicity, and Poverty Within an Urban District, investigated the role of "gatekeepers" or teachers, staff and administrators in urban schools. Their findings suggested that African American student successes, when measured by the distribution of cultural resources, are mostly determined by teacher judgments, which depend primarily on non-cognitive indicators (i.e., appearance and dress), which influence perceptions of overall student ability. The most striking observation made by Fracas and Grebe (1990) was the effect of student appearance on academic achievement when controlling for student performance.

"Gatekeepers define the stratification system through rewards they offer in response to signals represented by the skills, habits, and styles of individuals and groups. Rewards are provided, signals are sent, received, and the feedback loop is closed via social interaction shaped by the biographies, structural positions, and cultural backgrounds of the individuals and groups involved. The entire process is a negotiated one in which gatekeepers are trusted to perform

within a framework of procedural norms, structural constraints, and social arrangements" (1990:141).

Garrett and Duncan (1995) in Zone of Black Bodies: Language, Black Consciousness, and Adolescent Identities, suggested that the image of the colored body can represent intellectual degeneration. Consequently the forms of knowledge and strategies that teachers and administrators employ within schools reflect a positivistic (either/or) framework of American education. In this framework, difference is defined as a biological fact void of ecological circumstances or situations. In the end, teachers often depreciate the debilitating influence of racist paradigms, which are socially constructed and subjective, on the development of African American students. Thus, the behavioral perceptions of teachers, informed by the image of the colored body, replace cognitive aptitude as the main factor in deciding educational programs for African American students.

"Students of color, teachers allege, are too physical: They do not have the discipline to do labs, to go on field trips, or to participate in creative activities that require that they leave their seats" (1995:93).

Janice Hale-Benson (1986), in Black Children: Their Roots, Culture and Learning Styles, contended that schools as they presently exist cooperate in the economic and political oppression of African American students. In her view, African American students are in jeopardy as educational leaders favor integrated schools but are unwilling to address the achievement gap between African American and White students. Many integrated schools object to altering school curriculum to address the learning styles of African American students. Many fear that these changes would adversely affect White students. For example, while surveys in the mid-1960s indicated that nearly two-thirds of Whites accepted integrated schooling in principle, only 38 percent accepted a role for government in pressing for more integration. By the mid-1980s, White support for the principle of school integration had grown to 93 percent whereas White endorsement of government intervention had declined to 26 percent (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith, 1997:25-39).

Acceptance of the principle of racial integration does not mean that Whites want the government or schools to intervene aggressively or to have more personal contact with Black students. Moreover, African American students continue to be defined in White terms. Thus, when they fail to approximate the norms of White students, they are regarded as deficient, deviant, or pathological.

For White parents and their children, schooling in America equates to entitlement. When schooling is perceived as entitlement, White parents and students manipulate the school system in subtle ways to protect and secure advantages for their children, thus creating for them a daily safety net in the social ecology and everyday construction of schooling. Schools consequently practice a cultural pedagogy that enhances the culture and history of white students at the expense of African American student achievement.

Cultural Pedagogy

In Dreamkeepers (1994), Gloria Ladson-Billings advanced the thesis that in order for African American students to achieve, educational practices as well as the culture and the experiences of African American students must be included in the conventional curriculum. In this way, culture becomes an integral part of the learning process. As the culture of African Americans becomes integrated into the conventional curriculum students begin to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Here analyses are grounded in a theory of "cultural pedagogy" that empowers students to intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically use cultural references to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

"The primary aim of culturally relevant teaching is to assist in the development of a relevant Black personality that allows African American students to choose academic success and yet still identify with African and African American culture.

These cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture, but rather aspects of the curriculum in their own right" (1994: 1).

Teachers who practice culturally relevant teaching have positive perceptions of themselves as well as of their students. For them, teaching is an art or a calling that requires an unwavering commitment to the overall development of all of their students. As a result, teachers who practice culturally relevant teaching are passionate about discovering ways to make the learning process engaging. They demonstrate a belief that all students can succeed and they acquire the resources necessary to achieve school goals and outcomes. In short, these teachers develop relationships with their students through which they share with their students the responsibility of realizing their academic goals. They endeavor to become part of the larger community, thereby establishing a sense of authentic concern. They nurture a sense of connection with their students as they encourage them to become critical and creative thinkers.

How do we build school curriculum that nourishes critical and creative thinkers? Critical pedagogy challenges conventional assumptions of intellectual freedom, equality, and justice for all in the United States (Sleeter, 2001). Power, control and dominance are critical concepts taught to show their casual relationship to social inequality – race, class, gender, ethnicity, disability homophobia, and xenophobia. Critical pedagogy challenges teachers and students to revisit and to change the mainstream/White and minority experience in schools to transform learners into critical and creative thinkers. The persistent influence of mainstream/white and minority experience on school curriculum produces a sentiment associated with the statement "the lies my teacher told me" (Loewen 1995).

Schools strengthen power imbalances by their very structures and do little to question racial myths that exist in society outside of school buildings. Critical pedagogy does not ignore the "schooling" that occurs outside the classroom because it is in these mediated spaces that adolescents begin to answer the question "who am I." As such, these pedagogical sites outside the classroom lure adolescents into power relations that function inside the school along class, race, and gender divisions.

Summary

Every child growing up in the United States begins to subliminally learn about mainstream/White and minority experience. It is in schools where mainstream/White and minority experience are both produced and transmitted. To combat the impact of mainstream/White and minority experience on African American student achievement, educators must expose the myths that exist in both curricular and extracurricular models inside and outside of schools.

To gain understandings of mainstream/White and minority experience, educators and teachers must turn classrooms into public spaces to investigate and discuss the role which power, control and dominance play in perpetuating social inequality in schools, community, and society.

APPENDIX B

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION BY DEPARTMENT
AND BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS:
SEMESTER II; 2000-2001**

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: ART		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	186	98	37	18	3	342	3.30
	Percent In Ethnic	54.4	28.7	10.8	5.3	0.9	100.0	
Black	Count	30	40	35	12	0	117	2.75
	Percent In Ethnic	25.6	34.2	29.9	10.3	0	100.0	
Total	Count	216	138	72	30	3	459	3.16
	Percent In Ethnic	47.1	30.1	15.7	6.5	0.7	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

ART	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.812	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	40.742	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	459		

2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .76.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: BUSINESS		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	232	106	75	28	15	456	3.12
	Percent In Ethnic	50.9	23.2	16.4	6.1	3.3	100.0	
Black	Count	29	43	45	43	26	186	2.03
	Percent In Ethnic	15.6	23.1	24.2	23.1	14.0	100.0	
Total	Count	261	149	120	71	41	642	2.81
	Percent In Ethnic	40.7	23.2	18.7	11.1	6.4	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

BUSINESS	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	102.773	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	103.827	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	642		

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.88.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: DRIVER EDUCATION		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	34	122	46	11	6	219	2.76
	Percent In Ethnic	15.5	55.7	21.0	5.0	2.7	100.0	
Black	Count	2	14	31	7	18	72	1.65
	Percent In Ethnic	2.8	19.4	43.1	9.7	25.0	100.0	
Total	Count	36	136	77	18	24	291	2.49
	Percent In Ethnic	12.4	46.7	26.5	6.2	8.2	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

DRIVER EDUCATION	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	66.811	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	65.152	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	291		

1 cell (10.0%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.45

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	776	532	266	84	27	1685	3.15
	Percent In Ethnic	46.1	31.6	15.8	5.0	1.6	100.0	
Black	Count	112	213	193	100	50	668	2.35
	Percent In Ethnic	16.8	31.9	28.9	15.0	7.5	100.0	
Total	Count	888	745	459	184	77	2353	2.93
	Percent In Ethnic	37.7	31.7	19.5	7.8	3.3	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

ENGLISH	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	262.430	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	264.752	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	2353		

2 cells (20.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.86.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: WORLD LANGUAGES		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	453	926	245	62	18	1704	3.02
	Percent In Ethnic	26.6	54.3	14.4	3.6	1.1	100.0	
Black	Count	45	90	103	56	18	312	2.28
	Percent In Ethnic	14.4	28.8	33.0	17.9	5.8	100.0	
Total	Count	498	1016	348	118	36	2016	2.90
	Percent In Ethnic	24.7	50.4	17.3	5.9	1.8	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

WORLD LANGUAGES	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	227.924	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	191.137	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	2016		

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.57.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: HISTORY		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	456	462	226	85	26	1255	2.99
	Percent In Ethnic	36.3	36.8	18.0	6.8	2.1	100.0	
Black	Count	56	131	129	87	24	427	2.25
	Percent In Ethnic	13.1	30.7	30.2	20.4	5.6	100.0	
Total	Count	512	593	355	172	50	1682	2.80
	Percent In Ethnic	30.4	35.3	21.1	10.2	3.0	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

HISTORY	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	153.450	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	153.131	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	1682		

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.69.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	77	29	15	7	1	129	3.35
	Percent In Ethnic	59.7	22.5	11.6	5.4	0.8	100.0	
Black	Count	23	22	34	14	5	98	2.45
	Percent In Ethnic	23.5	22.4	34.7	14.3	5.1	100.0	
Total	Count	100	51	49	21	6	227	2.96
	Percent In Ethnic	44.1	22.5	21.6	9.3	2.6	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.982	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	40.345	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	227		

2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.59.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: TECHNOLOGY		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	42	34	21	12	3	112	2.89
	Percent In Ethnic	37.5	30.4	18.8	10.7	2.7	100.0	
Black	Count	5	10	18	11	8	52	1.87
	Percent In Ethnic	9.6	19.2	34.6	21.2	15.4	100.0	
Total	Count	47	44	39	23	11	164	2.57
	Percent In Ethnic	28.7	26.8	23.8	14.0	6.7	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

TECHNOLOGY	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	26.340	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	27.297	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	164		

1 cell (10.0%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.49.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: LEARNING DISABILITY (Self-Contained)		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	8	19	25	2	1	55	2.56
	Percent In Ethnic	14.5	34.5	45.5	3.6	1.8	100.0	
Black	Count	6	14	3	8	5	36	2.22
	Percent In Ethnic	16.7	38.9	8.3	22.2	13.9	100.0	
Total	Count	14	33	28	10	6	91	2.43
	Percent In Ethnic	15.4	36.3	30.8	11.0	6.6	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

LEARNING DISABILITY (Self-Contained)	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.569	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.565	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	91		

3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.37.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: MATHEMATICS		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	387	554	426	162	55	1584	2.67
	Percent In Ethnic	24.4	35.0	26.9	10.2	3.5	100.0	
Black	Count	40	122	186	132	74	554	1.86
	Percent In Ethnic	7.2	22.0	33.6	23.8	13.4	100.0	
Total	Count	427	676	612	294	129	2138	2.46
	Percent In Ethnic	20.0	31.6	28.6	13.8	6.0	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

MATHEMATICS	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	210.735	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	210.347	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	2138		

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 33.43.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: MUSIC		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	310	30	3	0	0	343	3.90
	Percent In Ethnic	90.4	8.7	0.9	0.0	0.0	100.0	
Black	Count	28	7	3	1	0	39	3.59
	Percent In Ethnic	71.5	17.9	7.7	2.6	0.0	100.0	
Total	Count	338	37	6	1	0	382	3.86
	Percent In Ethnic	88.5	9.7	1.6	0.3	0.0	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

MUSIC	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.586	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	14.549	4	.002
N of Valid Cases	382		

4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .10.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: BEHAVIOR DISABILITY		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	43	45	34	21	0	143	2.77
	Percent In Ethnic	30.1	31.5	23.8	14.7	0.0	100.0	
Black	Count	20	40	39	20	7	126	2.37
	Percent In Ethnic	15.9	31.7	31.0	15.9	5.6	100.0	
Total	Count	63	85	73	41	7	269	2.58
	Percent In Ethnic	23.4	31.6	27.1	15.2	2.6	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

BEHAVIOR DISABILITY	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.044	4	.005
Likelihood Ratio	17.884	4	.001
N of Valid Cases	269		

2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.28.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: PHYSICAL EDUCATION		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	808	446	93	16	0	1363	3.50
	Percent In Ethnic	59.3	32.7	6.8	1.2	0.0	100.0	
Black	Count	169	249	98	20	1	537	3.05
	Percent In Ethnic	31.5	46.4	18.2	3.7	0.2	100.0	
Total	Count	977	695	191	36	1	1900	3.37
	Percent In Ethnic	51.4	36.6	10.1	1.9	0.1	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	143.349	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	141.569	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	1900		

2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .28.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: SCIENCE		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	454	560	302	107	27	1450	2.90
	Percent In Ethnic	31.3	38.6	20.8	7.4	1.9	100.0	
Black	Count	46	100	166	123	55	490	1.92
	Percent In Ethnic	9.4	20.4	33.9	25.1	11.2	100.0	
Total	Count	500	660	468	230	82	1940	2.65
	Percent In Ethnic	25.8	34.0	24.1	11.9	4.2	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

SCIENCE	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	302.833	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	293.861	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	1940		

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 20.71.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: SPEECH		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	51	18	12	2	1	84	3.38
	Percent In Ethnic	60.7	21.4	14.3	2.4	1.2	100.0	
Black	Count	16	18	8	7	1	50	2.82
	Percent In Ethnic	32.0	36.0	16.0	14.0	2.0	100.0	
Total	Count	67	36	20	9	2	134	3.17
	Percent In Ethnic	50.0	26.9	14.9	6.7	1.5	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

SPEECH	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.15	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	14.247	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	134		

3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .75.

ETHNIC-GRADE CROSSTABULATION

DEPARTMENT: TEAM		GRADE					TOTAL	MEAN GPA
RACE	DATA	A	B	C	D	F	PERCENT	
White	Count	7	4	2	1	0	14	3.21
	Percent In Ethnic	50.0	28.6	14.3	7.1	0.0	100.0	
Black	Count	8	3	5	3	1	20	2.70
	Percent In Ethnic	40.0	15.0	25.0	15.0	5.0	100.0	
Total	Count	15	7	7	4	1	34	2.91
	Percent In Ethnic	44.1	20.6	20.6	11.8	2.9	100.0	

CHI-SQUARE TESTS

TEAM	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.515	4	.642
Likelihood Ratio	2.907	4	.574
N of Valid Cases	34		

8 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

APPENDIX C

**CORRELATIONS BETWEEN MEAN WEIGHTED GPA
AND PRAIRIE STATE ACHIEVEMENT EXAMINATION READING
AND MATH SCORES BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS
SEMESTER II: CLASS OF 2002**

WEIGHTED GPA FOR SENIORS: WHITE AND BLACK; CLASS OF 2002

ETHNICITY		WEIGHTED GPA	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-READ	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-MATH
WHITE	Mean	3.2740	24.75	23.90
	N	416	396	396
	Std. Deviation	.96505	6.181	5.563
	Std. Error of Mean	.04732	.311	.280
BLACK	Mean	2.2942	16.80	16.94
	N	145	132	132
	Std. Deviation	.83957	5.017	3.461
	Std. Error of Mean	.06972	.437	.301
TOTAL	Mean	3.0208	22.76	22.15
	N	561	528	528
	Std. Deviation	1.02750	6.840	5.939
	Std. Error of Mean	.04338	.298	.258

ANOVA		SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
WGPA Ethnicity	Between Groups	103.221	1	103.221	118.238	.000
	Within Groups	488.004	559	.873		
	Total	591.225	560			
PS ACT Read Ethnicity	Between Groups	6268.182	1	6268.182	179.313	.000
	Within Groups	18387.225	526	34.957		
	Total	24655.407	527			
PS ACT Math Ethnicity	Between Groups	4795.162	1	4795.162	182.859	.000
	Within Groups	13793.475	526	26.223		
	Total	18588.636	527			

WHITE

CORRELATIONS		WEIGHTED GPA	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-READ	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-MATH
WEIGHTED GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.540	.710
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	416	395	395
PRAIRIE STATE ACT-READ	Pearson Correlation	.540	1.000	.652
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	395	396	396
PRAIRIE STATE ACT-MATH	Pearson Correlation	.710	.652	1.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	395	396	396

BLACK

CORRELATIONS		WEIGHTED GPA	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-READ	PRAIRIE STATE ACT-MATH
WEIGHTED GPA	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.561	.591
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	145	131	131
PRAIRIE STATE ACT-READ	Pearson Correlation	.561	1.000	.561
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	131	132	132
PRAIRIE STATE ACT-MATH	Pearson Correlation	.591	.561	1.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	131	132	132

APPENDIX D

**CORRELATION BETWEEN MEAN WEIGHTED GPA
AND ACT PLAN READING SCORES FOR JUNIORS
BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS:
CLASS OF 2003**

WEIGHTED GPA FOR JUNIORS: WHITE AND BLACK; CLASS OF 2003

RACE	MEAN WGPA	N	STD. DEV.	STD. ERROR OF MEAN
WHITE	3.25	457	.97138	.04544
BLACK	2.25	170	.88473	.06786
TOTAL	2.98	627	1.04685	.04181

ANOVA		SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
WGPA By Race	Between Groups	123.476	1	123.476	137.183	.000
	Within Groups	562.554	625	.900		
	Total	686.030	626			

ACT PLAN READING SCORES FOR CLASS OF 2003 BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS; FALL 2000

RACE	MEAN	N	STD. DEV.	STD. ERROR OF MEAN
WHITE	20.47	429	4.743	.229
BLACK	15.29	143	4.634	.388
TOTAL	19.17	572	5.218	.218

ANOVA		SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
PLAN Score by Race	Between Groups	2872.028	1	2872.028	129.14	.000
	Within Groups	12676.490	57	22.239		
	Total	15548.517	57			

**CORRELATION BETWEEN ACT PLAN READING SCORE AND WEIGHTED GAP FOR
WHITE JUNIORS; CLASS OF 2003**

WHITE		ACT PLAN READING SCORE	WGPA
ACT PLAN READING SCORE	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.531
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	429	428
WGPA	Pearson Correlation	.531	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	428	457

**CORRELATION BETWEEN ACT PLAN READING SCORE AND WEIGHTED GPA FOR
BLACK JUNIORS; CLASS OF 2003**

BLACK		ACT PLAN READING SCORE	WGPA
ACT PLAN READING SCORE	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.474
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	143	141
WGPA	Pearson Correlation	.474	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	141	170

APPENDIX E

**CORRELATION BETWEEN MEAN WEIGHTED GPA
AND ACT PLAN READING SCORES FOR SOPHOMORES
BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS; CLASS OF 2004**

WEIGHTED GPA FOR SOPHOMORES: WHITE AND BLACK; CLASS OF 2004

RACE	MEAN	N	STD. DEV.	STD. ERROR OF MEAN
WHITE	3.19	464	.84648	.03930
BLACK	2.16	185	.89861	.06607
TOTAL	2.89	649	.97899	.03843

ANOVA		SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
WGPA By Race	Between Groups	140.726	1	140.726	189.556	.000
	Within Groups	480.333	647	.742		
	Total	621.059	648			

ACT PLAN READING SCORES FOR CLASS OF 2004 BY WHITE AND BLACK STUDENTS; FALL 2001

RACE	MEAN	N	STD. DEV.	STD. ERROR OF MEAN
WHITE	20.66	443	4.725	.224
BLACK	15.11	176	4.147	.313
TOTAL	19.08	619	5.207	.209

ANOVA		SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
Plan Score by Race	Between Groups	3878.326	1	3878.326	185.861	.000
	Within Groups	12874.795	617	20.867		
	Total	16753.121	618			

**CORRELATION BETWEEN ACT PLAN READING SCORE AND WEIGHTED GAP FOR
WHITE SOPHOMORES; CLASS OF 2004**

WHITE		ACT PLAN READING SCORE	WGPA
ACT PLAN READING SCORE	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.488
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	443	442
WGPA	Pearson Correlation	.488	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	442	464

**CORRELATION BETWEEN ACT PLAN READING SCORE AND WEIGHTED GPA FOR
BLACK SOPHOMORES; CLASS OF 2004**

BLACK		ACT PLAN READING SCORE	WGPA
ACT PLAN READING SCORE	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.393
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	176	172
WGPA	Pearson Correlation	.393	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	172	185

APPENDIX F

**PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER
FOR THE
INTERVIEW PROCESS**

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

201 North Scoville Avenue • Oak Park, Illinois 60302-2296

June 26, 2001

«TITLE» «PARENT_FIRST» «PARENT_LAST_NAME»
«ADDRESS»
«City» «ST» «ZIP»

Dear «TITLE» «PARENT_LAST_NAME»:

During this school year, the Board of Education and the staff of Oak Park and River Forest High School have renewed their commitment to eliminate an achievement gap which is reflected in the academic progress of many of our African American students. Because our school district was fortunate to be awarded a one-year *Goals 2000* grant specifically to address this gap, a collaborative research team has designed and must complete an important study by August, 2001. The purposes of this letter are to outline the main features of the study and to request your permission for «STUDENT» to participate in this study.

Participation in this study will involve the following activities:

1. Completion of a short survey of 18 multiple-choice items which addresses demographic information. «STUDENT» will likely need your assistance in providing some information on the survey.
2. Completion of the 29 short items on the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale. Please see attached letter from Dr. Manley.
3. Participation in an individual interview of approximately 45 minutes which will be conducted by Michael Mitchell, OPRF history and sociology teacher, and which will take place at our school. Mr. Mitchell will schedule the interview at a time which will not interrupt classes. During the interview «STUDENT» will be asked to share opinions about and experiences with circumstances which have advanced and/or impeded academic achievement at Oak Park and River Forest High School. Mr. Mitchell's questions will focus on how teachers, peers, home environments, self, and our school have promoted and/or discouraged academic achievement.
4. Later in this school year, we hope to interview the parents or guardians of all students who are interviewed. Parent interviews will also be an important component of this research study and will focus on the same areas as the student interviews.

The African American Achievement Study team will interview approximately 75 students who will be chosen from a stratified random sample of 200 African American sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Mr. Mitchell will promptly notify the parents and guardians of students who are selected for participation in the interview component of the research study. Because student responses during the interviews must be accurately recorded for analysis by researchers, each interview session must be videotaped. These tapes must be kept for validation and replication of the study. Please be assured

AREA (708) 383-0700

TTY/TDD (708) 524-5500

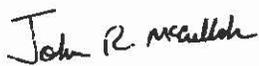
FAX (708) 383-3484

that complete confidentiality will be strictly maintained for all students who complete the surveys and who are interviewed. In no instance will the names or identities of students or parents/guardians be disclosed in any report that is generated by the study. Only group data will be used. All participants will remain anonymous.

We ask that «STUDENT» complete the enclosed two scan forms and that you complete the response form on which you will indicate your willingness to allow «STUDENT» to participate in this important research study. Please return the two scan forms and the response form as soon as possible, *in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope*. Once again, we assure you that these surveys and the interviews will be treated with complete confidentiality throughout the entire research study. If you wish to have additional information about the study, please contact Mr. Mitchell at (708) 434-3316.

The information which students and their parents will provide through all components of this study – the surveys and the interviews – will enable our high school to determine specific improvements which will benefit all students while addressing the achievement gap of African American students. Thank you for your consideration of this special request!

Sincerely,



John R. McCulloh
President, Board of Education



Susan J. Bridge, Ed.D.
Superintendent/Principal

Members of the Oak Park and River Forest High School Research Team:

Theodoric (Ted) Manley, Jr., Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Sociology, DePaul University
Carl Spight, Ph.D.
Independent Consultant (Statistical Analysis)
Frank Danes, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Operations (retired)
Mary Bennett
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Richard Deptuch
Director of Instruction
Michael Mitchell
Teacher of History and Sociology
Toni Smith-Kent
Division Head of Dean-Counselors

Enclosures: Demographic Survey and Scan Sheet
Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale and Scan Sheet
Participation Response Form
Return Envelope

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY



February 16, 2001

Department of Sociology
2320 North Kenmore Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60614-3298
773/325-7820
FAX: 773/325-7821
<http://www.depaul.edu/~soc/>

Dear Parent (s):

The attached Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) has been widely used in the social sciences to understand racial identity. It was first developed by Cross (1978) and further developed by Helms (1990). The Parham and Helms Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) has been associated with a range of behavioral, affective, and cultural variables.

The African American Achievement Study research team at Oak Park and River Forest High School decided to use the scale as one component of its comprehensive research design to investigate the gap in achievement between White and Black students. To our knowledge this is the first time the BRIAS has been utilized to investigate the affect of racial identity on high school student achievement.

Some of the questions on the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (RAIS) may seem outrageous, provocative, and can evoke reaction. Please review the scale before having your son or daughter complete it. When reviewing the questions on the scale we ask that you keep in mind that the committee does not endorse any of these statements. We do, however, recognize that racial identity is a very important attribute that may be related to African American student achievement at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

If you need to see further literature and information regarding the scale and its use please contact the web site below. You may also contact me or call Dr. Carl Spight (708-383-9044) with any further questions you have regarding the scale.

Literature and information on Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) can be found at this web site www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/isprc/

Thank you for your time and I hope you decide to let your son or daughter participate in the African American Achievement Study at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theodoric Manley, Jr.'.

Theodoric (Ted) Manley, Jr.
Associate Professor of Sociology
(773) 325-4718
tmanley@wppost.depaul.edu

**AFRICAN AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT STUDY
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL**

PARTICIPATION FORM

Please provide the following information and return this completed form with the two completed survey scan forms in the enclosed envelope by **Friday, February 23.**

Student Name _____ ID _____
Please print

Parent(s) Name(s) _____
Please print

Home Address _____ E-mail Address _____

Daytime Phone (____) _____ Evening Phone (____) _____
Best time to call _____

Please check (✓) all statements which describe your decisions about participating in this research study.

_____ My son/daughter has my permission to participate in the three components of the research study described in the enclosed letter.
_____ The Demographic Survey (Scan Form)
_____ BRIAS Scale (Scan Form)
_____ Interview (To be arranged by Mr. M. Mitchell)

_____ I am/we are willing to participate in a parent-interview component of this research study.

_____ I am/we are returning the two completed survey forms and this participation form in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

Date _____ Parent(s) Signature(s) _____

If you have questions, please call
Richard Deptuch, OPRF Director of Instruction, (708) 434-3373.
Mary Bennett, OPRF Assistant Superintendent, (708) 434-3372.

APPENDIX G

**DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF
STUDENTS IN RESEARCH SAMPLE**

AFRICAN AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT STUDY

Demographic Survey

- **Instructions: Please record your responses on the attached scan sheet.**

1. Please indicate the elementary school where you completed sixth (6th) grade:
 - a) a public school in District 90 (River Forest)
 - b) a public school in District 97 (Oak Park)
 - c) a catholic or other private school in either Oak Park or River Forest
 - d) a public school outside of Oak Park or River Forest
 - e) a catholic or other private school outside of Oak Park or River Forest
2. At what grade did you enter the Oak Park or River Forest public school system?
 - a) K - 4th grade
 - b) 5th-6th grade
 - c) 7th - 8th grade
 - d) 9th - 10th grade
 - e) 11th - 12th grade
3. How many schools (either public or private) have you attended for grades K-6?
 - a) one (1)
 - b) two (2)
 - c) three (3) or four (4)
 - d) five (5) or six (6)
 - e) seven (7) or more
4. How many schools (either public or private) have you attended for grades 7-8?
 - a) one (1)
 - b) two (2)
 - c) three (3) or four (4)
 - d) five (5) or six (6)
 - e) seven (7) or more
5. How many schools (either public or private) have you attended for grades 9-12?
 - a) one (1)
 - b) two (2)
 - c) three (3) or four (4)
 - d) five (5) or six (6)
 - e) seven (7) or more
6. Have other members of your family ever attended OPRFHS before you began attending OPRFHS? (mark all that apply)
 - a) mother and/or father
 - b) guardian or step parent
 - c) brother and/or sister
 - d) other relative (aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent, etc.)
 - e) no one preceded me at OPRFHS
7. Please indicate the highest level of education completed by your mother or stepmother:
 - a) did not complete high school
 - b) received high school diploma
 - c) some college or 2-year college degree
 - d) college graduate
 - e) additional schooling beyond college including professional or graduate degree
8. Please indicate the occupation of your mother/stepmother. (write in the space for comment 1)

TURN OVER 

9. Please indicate the highest level of education completed by your father or stepfather:
- did not complete high school
 - received high school diploma
 - some college or 2-year college degree
 - college graduate
 - additional schooling beyond college including professional or graduate degree
10. Please indicate the occupation of your father/stepfather: (write in the space for comment 2)
11. Which parent(s) or guardians do you live with during the school year? (mark all that apply, continues to question 12)
- my mother
 - my father
 - stepmother
 - stepfather
 - other non-parent relative
12. Question 11 – continued (mark all that apply)
- non-parent or legal guardian
 - foster parent(s)
 - friends
 - alone
13. How many brother and sisters do you have?
- none (0)
 - one (1)
 - two (2)
 - three (3)
 - four (4) or more
14. What is your family income level?
- less than \$30,000 per year
 - between \$30,000 and \$60,000 per year
 - between \$60,000 and \$100,000 per year
 - greater than \$100,000 per year
 - do not know
15. Have you ever attended a summer school for academic reasons at any time since 5th grade?
- no
 - yes, one (1) time
 - yes, two (2) times
 - yes, three (3) or more times.
16. If you answered “yes” to question 15: why did you go to summer school? (mark all that apply)
- it was required
 - I failed a course
 - to get a requirement out of the way
 - for fun
 - to prepare for a course
17. Which of the following resources are available to you at home? (mark all that apply)
- access to a computer
 - access to the Internet
 - a public library card
 - a quiet room in which to study
 - academic help from an adult (parent, guardian, grandparent, brother or sister)
18. Indicate the sources of extra help within the school that you have used: (mark all that apply)
- extra help from one or more of my teachers
 - the Tutoring Center in room 372
 - the Library
 - a divisional computer lab (math, history, for. language, fine arts, business, or English)
 - a tutor who is not one of my teachers

APPENDIX H

**EXPLANATION OF OPRHFS' WEIGHTED
GRADE POINT SYSTEM**

RANK IN CLASS (RIC)

The basic component in computing a student's Rank in Class (RIC) is the Grade Point Average (GPA) which is an average of a student's performance in all completed coursework. Coursework in physical education, driver education, resource and learning support, musical performance groups, school publications, and Newscene is excluded from the GPA. This base GPA is then weighted by a factor called the Academic Program Index (API) representing the academic difficulty of a student's total program. A special education student may be ranked with other students in his or her class if 80% or more of all courses taken by that student which can be included in the calculations for GPA are regular education courses as opposed to instructional level special education courses.

The API is determined by the following formula:

$$\text{API} = \text{honors level points} \times .01 + 1.0$$

Honors level points may be accumulated by earning an A or B grade in any of the following courses:

<p>ENGLISH English 1-2A English Literature 1-2A American Literature 1-2A American Literature 1-2A/J African-American Literature A Humanities A AP College English: Literature and Composition 1-2</p>	<p>WORLD LANGUAGES French 1-2A French 3-4A French 5-6A French 7-8A AP French 9-10 German 5-6A German 7-8A Italian 5-6A Italian 7-8A Spanish 1-2A Spanish 3-4A Spanish 5-6A Spanish 7-8A AP Spanish 9-10 Japanese 5-6A Japanese 7-8A Latin Prose 1-2A Latin Poetry 1-2A</p>
<p>HISTORY World History 1-2A American History 1-2A Philosophy A</p>	<p>MATHEMATICS Intermediate Algebra F 1-2A Advanced Algebra F 1-2A Plane Geometry 1-2A Geometry 1-2A College Algebra/Trigonometry 1-2A Pre-Calculus 1-2A AP Statistics 1-2 AP Calculus 1-2 AB AP Calculus 1-2 BC AP Computer Science 1-2 Computer Science 1-2A</p>
<p>SCIENCE Anthropology A Biology 1-2A Chemistry 1-2A Geology 1-2A Physics 1-2A</p>	<p>AP American History 1-2 AP European History 1-2 AP Psychology 1-2 AP Environmental Science 1-2 AP Biology 1-2 AP Chemistry 1-2 AP Physics 1-2</p>
<p>BUSINESS AP Economics 1-2</p>	<p>VISUAL ARTS Advanced Studio Art 1-2A AP Studio Art 1-2</p>

RANK IN CLASS (RIC) continued on next page.

RANK IN CLASS (RIC) continued:

There is no limit to the number of honors level courses a student may take; however, there is a limit to the number of honors level points that a student may receive per semester. A student may not receive honors level points for more than three courses in any one semester. "Extra" points from one semester may be carried forward to subsequent semesters and, to a maximum of 24 honors level points, will be included in the calculation of weighted grade point average.

In the last step of this process, the student's GPA is multiplied by the API. This weighted GPA is used to determine RIC, honor societies eligibility, scholarship awards, and valedictorian. A student's high school transcript will show the unweighted and weighted GPA's and will contain the RIC based on the weighted GPA.

Example: A student earns A or B grades in three honors level courses first semester. The Academic Program Index (API) is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{API} &= 3 \times .01 + 1.0 \\ \text{API} &= 1.03 \end{aligned}$$

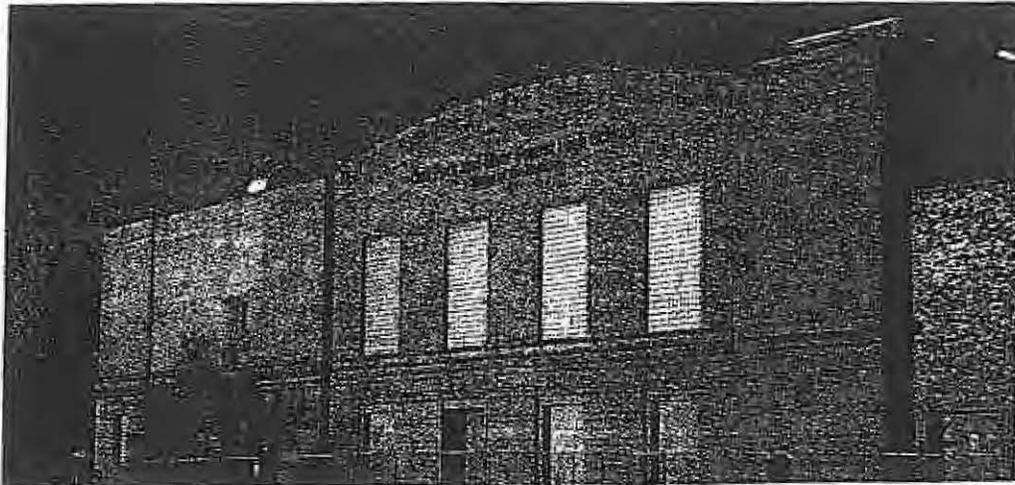
Suppose that the student's overall GPA through the end of first semester is 3.4. The weighted GPA (WGPA) is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{WGPA} &= \text{GPA} \times \text{API} \\ \text{WGPA} &= 3.4 \times 1.03 \\ \text{WGPA} &= 3.502 \end{aligned}$$

If this student earns A or B grades in three or more honors level courses during the second semester, the API at the end of the year will be 1.06.

Handling of Repeats of Failed Courses in the GPA. When a failed course has been repeated, only the passing grade for the repeated course will be a factor in a student's grade point average. Both the failing and the passing efforts will be listed on the student's transcript, but only the passing effort will be recognized by the computer in computing a student's overall grade point average.

Honors Level Points for Transfer Credits. Honors level points for A and B grades in honors level courses taken in other high schools will be awarded to transfer students only if they earn A or B grades in honors level classes in the same academic departments at some time during their enrollment at OPRFHS. Example: A student transfers from X High School after sophomore year. The transcript shows A and B grades in English and science honors level classes taken during the freshman and sophomore years. Honors level points will be awarded for these grades only if the student earns A or B grades in junior or senior honors level classes in English and science at OPRFHS.



APPENDIX I
STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Student Interview Protocol

The questions listed below framed our “theory of the student.” They assisted the research team in interpreting, scrutinizing, validating and analyzing each student in the sample.

Interview Schedule

GPA:

- a. Can you tell me (name of student), what are the factors, reasons, and explanations for your current grade point average (state GPA)?

Factors: When do you schedule time to study? Do you schedule enough time in your day to do all the homework required of you on an everyday basis? How do you prepare for tests?

Reasons: What is your passion for education? What do you want to be? What do you see yourself doing after high school?

Explanations: What do you do to discipline yourself to stay on task academically? What do you do to avoid distractions and peer/community temptations to participate in non-academic social events?

School Climate (Hypothesis One):

1. Can you describe a situation or event in the school that encouraged you to academically achieve?
2. Can you describe an encounter you recently had with a teacher in which the teacher encouraged you to academically achieve?
3. Can you describe an encounter you recently had with a dean-counselor that encouraged you to academically achieve?

Parent Climate (Hypothesis Two):

1. Can you describe a situation or event with your parent(s) that encouraged you to academically achieve?
2. Can you describe an encounter you recently had with your parent(s) where your parent(s) encouraged you to academically achieve?
3. Can you describe an encounter you recently had with a sibling or close relative that encouraged you to academically achieve?

Peer Climate (Hypothesis Three):

1. Can you recall a situation with your friends where you discussed your academic performance? What did you talk about? What did you do and they think explained academic achievement?
2. Can you recall a situation with your friends where you were encouraged to academically achieve?

Test Environment (Several hypotheses are tangled in this series of questions):

1. When you have a test scheduled for a particular class, how do you prepare for it? Do you study alone? Do you study with students in the class? Do you study with your parents? Do you ask your teacher for help? (Hypothesis 1, 2, 3).
2. Can you describe a test situation where you felt nervous and apprehensive about taking the test? What made you nervous/apprehensive? Did you think you knew the test materials well enough to do well on the exam?
3. Do you know other students in your class that do well on exams? What do you think they do to do well? Are you like them? If so, why? If not, why?
4. What do your classroom teachers do to help you prepare for the exam? Were they supportive of your efforts to do well on the exam? How did they encourage you to study for the exam?

Classroom Climate (Hypothesis Five):

1. Can you describe a situation when you were in class and your teacher encouraged you to participate in class discussion? If so, what did the teacher do to encourage you to participate in class discussion? How often did he/she encourage you to participate in class discussion? When did he/she encourage you to participate in class discussion? Did you feel the teacher was supportive? Why did you feel he/she was supportive?
2. When you participate in class, do you think it improves your chances of getting a good grade? If you think class participation will improve your grade, tell me two reasons why you think it (class participation) will improve your chances of getting a good grade?
3. If the student can't recall a situation when a classroom teacher encouraged him/her to participate in class discussion, ask the following:
 - a. Have you ever been encouraged to participate in classroom discussion by your teachers? What do you think about not being encouraged by your teacher to participate? Where are you most likely to sit when in class? Do you try to avoid participating in class discussion?
4. When you attend class, do you come prepared with everything you need for that class? Tell me what you bring to your class that shows the teacher you are ready to learn the lesson for that day.
5. When you are in class, do you pay attention? On average, where do you sit when you go to class? When in class, do you raise your hand if you have a question or an answer, or if you want to make a point about what you read, or if you want to make a point about what the teacher is lecturing on?
6. When you talk with your dean counselor, do you tell him/her how you are doing in class? When you speak with your dean counselor, what do you focus on? Can you tell your dean counselor how you personally feel about your classroom teachers? Do you feel that he/she listens? Can you describe a situation when you shared with your dean counselor something personal about how you felt about a classroom teacher? What made you feel comfortable in sharing your personal insights with your dean counselor?

Cultural Climate (Hypothesis Six):

1. What would you say is the most important culture, value and behavior to use in the school for enhancing successful academic achievement?
2. Do you think there is more than one culture, value and behavior used in the school? If so, tell me each one and give me a brief description of each. Which one (or ones) is more likely to enhance your academic success? Which one (or ones) do you feel will not enhance your academic success? Please explain.
3. What cultural styles, values, language and behavior do you use when you are socializing with friends from your common group of African Americans? Where and when are you more likely to use these styles of communication? When, do you think, it is appropriate to use these cultural styles of communicating and when is it not? What do you use to alert you to those situations when it is appropriate and when it is not appropriate to use these cultural styles of communicating with friends from your common group of African Americans?

APPENDIX J

SAMPLE OF STUDENT PORTFOLIO

12

SGPA-2.892 WGPA-2.979 RANK - 331 / 661 CUME CRE- 44.0 CUME CRA- 44.0

COURSE	T1	T2	T3	EX	SM	CRE	TEACHER	LVL	SEL
1071 DEBATE 1	B	A		A	A	1.0 SM1 99		1	
1072 DEBATE 2	B	B		B	B	1.0 SM2 99		1	
1151 ENGLISH 1A	C	C		D	C	1.0 SM1 98		2	
1152 ENGLISH 2A	B	B		F	C	1.0 SM2 98		2	
1291 AM LIT 1A	B	C		B	B	1.0 SM1 99		2	
1292 AM LIT 2A	D	C		C	C	1.0 SM2 99		2	
1351 ENG LIT 1A	B	C		C	C	1.0 SM1 00		2	
1352 ENG LIT 2A	B	B		C	B	1.0 SM2 00		2	
REQ. CREDITS -	8.0								
202S INTRO ALG		B		B	B	.0 SUM 97		1	N
2131 INT ALG F 1A	C	C		C	C	1.0 SM1 98		2	
2132 INT ALG F 2A	D	D		C	D	1.0 SM2 98		2	
2251 PL GEOM 1A	B	D		F	D	1.0 SM1 99		2	
2252 PL GEOM 2A	C	F		F	D	1.0 SM2 99		2	
2331 ADV ALG 1	A	A		A	A	1.0 SM1 00		1	
2332 ADV ALG 2	A	A		B	A	1.0 SM2 00		1	
REQ. CREDITS -	6.0								
3231 WLD HIST 1	B	B		C	B	1.0 SM1 99		1	
3232 WLD HIST 2	A	A		A	A	1.0 SM2 99		1	
3331 AM HIST 1	C	B		B	B	1.0 SM1 00		1	
3332 AM HIST 2	A	A		A	A	1.0 SM2 00		1	
REQ. CREDITS -	4.0								
4751 SPANISH F 3A	B	B		D	B	1.0 SM1 98		2	
4752 SPANISH F 4A	D	C		D	C	1.0 SM2 98		2	
4771 SPANISH 5	C	B		C	C	1.0 SM1 99		1	
4772 SPANISH 6	C	C		C	C	1.0 SM2 99		1	
4831 SPANISH 7	B	B		B	B	1.0 SM1 00		1	
4832 SPANISH 8	A	B		C	A	1.0 SM2 00		1	
REQ. CREDITS -	6.0								
501S HEALTH ED		A		C	A	1.0 SUM 97		1	
5131 BIOL 1	C	C		D	C	1.0 SM1 98		1	
5132 BIOL 2	C	C		C	C	1.0 SM2 98		1	
5751 CHEM 1	B	A		A	A	1.0 SM1 00		1	
5752 CHEM 2	B	A		B	A	1.0 SM2 00		1	
REQ. CREDITS -	5.0								
602S CNSMR ED		B		B	B	1.0 SUM 98		1	
604 KEYBOARDING	C	B		B	B	1.0 SM1 98		1	
6052 WORD PRCSNG	C	D		C	C	1.0 SM2 98		1	
REQ. CREDITS -	3.0								
904 PHYS EDUC	A	A		A		1.0 SM1 98		1	N
904 PHYS EDUC	A	A		A		1.0 SM1 99		1	N
904 PHYS EDUC	B	C		C		1.0 SM1 00		1	N
9042 PHYS EDUC	A	A		A		1.0 SM2 98		1	N

REF: OSG560
 Date: 4/18/01

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
 TRANSCRIPT WORKING COPY

Page 2

12

SGPA-2.892 WGPA-2.979 RANK - 331 / 661 CUME CRE- 44.0 CUME CRA- 44.0

COURSE	T1	T2	T3	EX	SM	CRE	TEACHER	LVL	SEI
9042 PHYS EDUC	A	C			B	1.0 SM2 00		1	N
9202 DRIVER EDUC	C	D		D	D	1.0 SM2 99		1	N
REQ. CREDITS -	6.0								

TOTAL CREDITS EARNED- 38.0 TOTAL CREDITS ATTEMPTED- 38.0

CURRENT YEAR SCHEDULE

151 CREAT WRITG	B	B		B	B	1.0 SM1 01		1	
1532 JRNL WRITG	B					.0 SM2 01		1	
2451 CO AL/TRG 1	A	A		B	A	1.0 SM1 01		1	
2452 CO AL/TRG 2	B					.0 SM2 01		1	
3582 SOCIOLOGY	I					.0 SM2 01		1	
359 INTRO PSYCH	B	A		B	A	1.0 SM1 01		1	
3602 ADV PSYCH	C					.0 SM2 01		1	
366 AFRI-AM HIST	A	A		B	A	1.0 SM1 01		1	
5541 ENVIR SCI 1	A	A		B	A	1.0 SM1 01		1	
5542 ENVIR SCI 2	B					.0 SM2 01		1	
904 ADVENTURE ED	A					.0 SM1 01		1	N
904 BADMINTON		A			A	1.0 SM1 01		1	N
904 G INT SWIM	B					.0 SM2 01		1	N
904 DANCE DECADE						.0 SM2 01		1	N

CUR CREDIT EARNED- 6.0 CUR CREDIT ATTEMPTED- 6.0 CUR CREDIT POSSIBLE- 6

REPORT CARD WORKING COPY

4/18/

12

CREAT WRITNG			B 7	B 4	2B B	EXCESSIVE ABSENCES AFFECTING ACHI33E	
151	3						
CO AL/TRG 1			A 5	A 4	B A		
2451	2						
INTRO PSYCH			B	A 2	3B A	A PLEASURE TO HAVE IN CLASS	25
359	1						
AFRI-AM HIST			A 2	A 3	B A		
366	1						
ENVIR SCI 1			A 5	A 3	B A		
5541	1						
ADVENTURE ED			A 4				
904144	8						
BADMINTON				A 3	A		
904251	8						

6.00 3.800 3.800

44 6 45 3

44.00 2.892 2.979

Student Portfolio^a

	1	
Year in School - start of study	Senior	
Gender	F	
Feeder School	Emerson Jr High	
Special Education	no	
SGPA: First Semester		2.667
WGPA: First Semester		2.693
Select GPA '00		2.750
Weighted GPA '00		2.833
Select GPA '01		2.857
Weighted GPA '01		2.943
Resides With	mother	
Live With	mother & father	
Athlete	two sports	
Discipline Record 99/00	No disc record	
Discipline Record 00/01	No disc record	
Attendance Irregularities '00		181.00
Tardies '00		20.00
Attendance Irregularities '01		126.00
Tardies '01		22.00
Credits Eamed '00		38.00
Credits Attempted '00		38.00
Honors Crs Att '00		12
Honors Crs A/B '00		3
Honors Crs C/D '00		9
Honors Crs F/N/I '00		0
Credits Eamed '01		50.00
Credits Attempted '01		50.00
Honors Crs Att '01		12
Honors Crs A/B '01		3
Honors Crs C/D '01		9
Honors Crs F/N/I '01		0
ACT Comp		23
SAT Comp		1030
Homogeneous Student Activities		0
Non-Homogeneous Student Activities		1
BRIAS - pre-encounter		3.875
BRIAS - encounter		3.667
BRIAS - immersion		4.143
BRIAS - internalization		2.182
6th Grade	PS in D 97	
Enter OPRF Public Schools	K - 4th	
# Schools Att'd K - 6	3 - 4	
# Schools Att'd 7 - 8	1	
# Schools Att'd 9 - 12	1	
Family Att'd OPRFHS	no one	
Highest Educ - Mother/Stepmother	some college or two-year degree	
Occupation - Mother/Stepmother	customer svc	
Highest Educ - Father/Stepfather	high school diploma	
Occupation - Father/Stepfather	engineer	
# Brothers/Sisters	2	
Family Income	do not know	
Summer School Since 5th Grade	no	
Why Summer School		
Resources at Home		123
Resources at School		125

a. Limited to first 100 cases.



SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

6/25/01 **THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEST**

STUDENT NAME (LAST)	(MIDDLE)	SEX	BIRTH DATE
HOME ADDRESS (NUMBER-STREET)	(CITY)	(STATE)	(ZIP)
PARENT NAME			PHONE (708)
ENTRY DATE 8/29/97			DEAN
WITHDRAWAL 1 WITHDRAWAL 2		RE-ENTRY 1 RE-ENTRY 2	GRADUATION DATE 06/10/01

KEY TO ACADEMIC RECORD

LEVELS:
A- High ability, weighted (* = weighted course)
IS-Independent Study

GRADES:
A- Superior I- Incomplete
B- Good W- Withdrawal
C- Average M- Medical Excuse
D- Poor N- Grade and credit withheld due to excessive absences
F- Failure
P- Passing NC-No credit, non-graded class/activity
FX-Failure; successful retake appears elsewhere; FX not computed in GPA

ACADEMIC SUMMARY

CREDITS EARNED: 50.00

GPA Unweighted: 2.857 (4.00 max)

Weighted: 2.943 (4.98 max)

RANK IN CLASS (RIC): 340/615

RIC is based on the weighted GPA.

To be ranked, a student must earn 80% of credits in regular school subjects.

API: 1.03 (1.24 max)

The Academic Program Index is a GPA multiplier used to determine the Weighted GPA. API points, limited to three per semester, are accumulated in honors courses in English, math, science, history and foreign language in which a grade of A or B is earned. This table illustrates the maximum API by semester and its affect on the Weighted GPA.

Semester	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Max API	1.03	1.06	1.09	1.12	1.15	1.18	1.21	1.24
Max Weighted GPA	4.12	4.24	4.36	4.48	4.60	4.72	4.84	4.96

STATE MANDATES:

Cnsmr Ed P Health Ed P

Safety Ed P Cnstr Test P

TEST SCORES

SAT VBL 460 11/00/00
SAT MTH 570

ACT ENG 22 04/00/00

ACT MTH 26

ACT RDG 22

ACT SCI 23

ACT CMB 23

ACT ENG 22 10/00/00

ACT MTH 22

ACT RDG 22

ACT SCI 26

ACT CMB 23

YEAR:08	1996-1997	SUMMER	COURSE	GR	CRD
			INTRO ALG	B	.00
			HEALTH ED	A	1.00
YEAR:09	1997-1998	FALL	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* ENGLISH 1A	C	1.00
			* SPANISH F 3A	B	1.00
			BIOL 1	C	1.00
			KEYBOARDING	B	1.00
			* INT ALG F 1A	C	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	A	1.00
YEAR:09	1997-1998	SUMMER	COURSE	GR	CRD
			CNSMR ED	B	1.00
YEAR:10	1998-1999	FALL	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* AM LIT 1A	B	1.00
			* PL GEOM 1A	D	1.00
			WLD HIST 1	B	1.00
			DEBATE 1	A	1.00
			SPANISH 5	C	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	A	1.00
YEAR:11	1999-2000	FALL	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* ENG LIT 1A	C	1.00
			ADV ALG 1	A	1.00
			AM HIST 1	B	1.00
			CHEM 1	A	1.00
			SPANISH 7	B	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	C	1.00
YEAR:12	2000-2001	FALL	COURSE	GR	CRD
			CO AL/TRG 1	A	1.00
			ENVIR SCI 1	A	1.00
			AFRI-AM HIST	A	1.00
			INTRO PSYCH	A	1.00
			CREAT WRITNG	B	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	A	1.00

YEAR:09	1997-1998	SPRING	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* ENGLISH 2A	C	1.00
			* SPANISH F 4A	C	1.00
			BIOL 2	C	1.00
			WORD PRCSNG	C	1.00
			* INT ALG F 2A	D	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	A	1.00
YEAR:10	1998-1999	SPRING	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* PL GEOM 2A	D	1.00
			WLD HIST 2	A	1.00
			DEBATE 2	B	1.00
			DRIVER EDUC	D	1.00
			* AM LIT 2A	C	1.00
			SPANISH 6	C	1.00
YEAR:11	1999-2000	SPRING	COURSE	GR	CRD
			* ENG LIT 2A	B	1.00
			ADV ALG 2	A	1.00
			AM HIST 2	A	1.00
			CHEM 2	A	1.00
			SPANISH 8	A	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	B	1.00
YEAR:12	2000-2001	SPRING	COURSE	GR	CRD
			CO AL/TRG 2	B	1.00
			ENVIR SCI 2	B	1.00
			SOCIOLOGY	C	1.00
			ADV PSYCH	C	1.00
			JRNL WRITNG	B	1.00
			PHYS EDUC	B	1.00

APPENDIX K

THE OPRFHS CODE OF CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT Codes and Symbols

Codes

- A) Ranging from verbal warning, detention(s), up to 1 day ASP
- B) Ranging from detention(s), ASP, up to 2 days ISS
- C) Ranging from 3 to 5 days ASP up to 3 to 5 days ISS
- D) Ranging from 3 days ISS to 5 days OSS
- E) 5 to 10 days OSS and possible recommendation for expulsion
- F) F 10 days OSS, recommendation for expulsion
- G) Restitution required

ASP – After-school Suspension Program

ISS – In-School Suspension

OSS – Out-of-School Suspension

Symbols

- + May result in a referral to Support Services and/or appropriate mediation program
- # Restricted technology privileges
- ^^ At the Dean's discretion a portion of the consequence may be held in abeyance if the student completes an OPRFHS approved drug and alcohol program (this program is at the parent or guardian's discretion and expense)
- ** Mandatory parent-student conference with the Dean; behavioral contract
- * All drug paraphernalia will be turned over to the police for testing. Paraphernalia containing residue that tests positive for an illegal substance will be cause for changing the infraction code to "F"
- XX Intervention plan will be utilized and possible behavioral contract
- ++ Weapons may include, but are not limited to, the following: chemical substances, guns, knives, look-alike weapons, any object used as a weapon or any object altered to become a weapon
- ## Police will be notified

A Dean, Administrator or the Board may determine that additional interventions are necessary. These may include, but are not limited to the following: behavior contract, counseling services (school or outside agency), peer mediation, or a drug and alcohol program.

These guidelines are not all inclusive. A student committing an act of misconduct not listed will still be subject to disciplinary action. These guidelines are not to be considered as limiting discretion in the enumerated instances of aggravating or extenuating circumstances. Board policies and further explanations appear in the *General Catalog*. Definitions of terms appear in the glossary of the Code of Conduct.

CODE OF CONDUCT
2002-2003 Matrix

CLASS I INFRACTIONS	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
Inappropriate Attire	A	B	B	C
Leaving School without Permission	A	B	B	C
Truancy	A	A+	B	B
CLASS II INFRACTIONS XX - applies to all Class II incidents on the 3 rd offense	1ST Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
Aggressive Physical Behavior	B +	B - C	C **	D
Defiance of Authority	B	B +	C	D
Disruptive Behavior	A	B	C	D
Failure to Identify Self	B	B	C	D
Failure to Serve Detention	B	B	C	C
Forgery	B - C	C	D	D
Gambling	B	C	D	E
Possession of Beepers/Portable Phones	B	B	C	D
Smoking/Tobacco Poss. or Use	C	C	D	D
Unauthorized Area	B	C	D	E
Vandalism	C - G	C - G **	C - G	C - G
Verbal Abuse	B+	B - C	C **	D
CLASS III INFRACTIONS ** applies to all class III infractions	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
Arson/Bomb Threat/False Alarm	F	F	F	F
Battery	E - F	F	F	F
Bullying	D - E	E	F	F
Fighting	D +	D	E	F
Gang Activity ##	D - E	E - F	F	F
Gross Misconduct	C - E	C - E	F	F
Mob Action	E	F	F	F
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	C - D ^^	D - E ^^	F	F
Possession of Illegal/Controlled Substance ##	E - F ^^	F	F	F
Possession of Stolen Property or Theft ##	C - G	D - G	F - G	F - G
Possession of Weapon ++	E - F	F	F	F
Sexual Harassment/Misconduct	D - E	E	F	F
Technology Policy Misconduct	C - D #	C - E #	E #	F
Threats to Students/Faculty/Staff	D - E +	D - F +	F	F
Use of Illegal/Controlled Substance	D - F ^^	D - F ^^	F	F
Use or Possession of Alcohol	D - F ^^	D - F ^^	F	F

The Code of Conduct is in effect at all school-related activities on or off campus and on the way to or from school. Parent conference and behavioral contract are required for any Class III violation.

APPENDIX L

**CORRELATION BETWEEN BRIAS RESPONSES,
HONORS SUCCESS FRACTION AND
STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES**

Table A. Correlation Matrix of BRIAS and Honors Success Fraction

Matrix	Pre-Encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	Honors A or B
Weighted GPA					
Pre-Encounter	1.000				
Encounter	-.041	1.000			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.000		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.000	
Honors A or B	.309	-.044	.070	-.295*	1.000

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table B. Correlation Matrix of BRIAS and SAT Comp.

Matrix	Pre-Encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	SAT Comp.
Weighted GPA					
Pre-Encounter	1.000				
Encounter	-.041	1.000			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.000		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.000	
Honors A or B	.434	-.113	.0300	-.373*	1.000

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table C. Correlation Matrix of BRIAS and ACT Comp.

Matrix	Pre-Encounter	Encounter	Immersion	Internalization	ACT Comp
Weighted GPA					
Pre-Encounter	1.000				
Encounter	-.041	1.000			
Immersion	.250	.439**	1.000		
Internalization	-.362**	.131	.086	1.000	
Honors A or B	.269	-.010	.127	-.475*	1.000

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX M
HYPOTHESIS TESTING USING ED EXCEL
SURVEY DATA

Hypothesis One:

The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who find school (peers, teachers, staff, administration) to be both a safe and reinforcing environment both in sharing and expressing feelings and intellect.

Table A. –Correlation of Student GPA Last Year and ‘Feel Safe and Happy About School’ by Black and White Students

BLACK	Student GPA Last Term	‘Feel Safe and Happy’
GPA Last Term	1.00	.191**
N	207	207
‘Feel Safe and Happy’	.191**	1.00
N	207	219
WHITE		
GPA Last Term	1.00	.244**
N	626	626
‘Feel Safe and Happy’	.244**	1.00
N	626	644

Table B. –Correlations of Student GPA Last Year and ‘Feel Safe and Happy About School And Teacher’

BLACK	Student GPA Last Term	‘Feel Safe and Happy About School and Teacher’
GPA Last Term	1.00	.141**
N	398	398
‘Feel Safe and Happy About School and Teacher’	.141**	1.00
N	398	416
WHITE		
GPA Last Term	1.00	.260**
N	1279	1279
‘Feel Safe and Happy About School and Teacher’	.264**	1.00
N	1279	1318

Hypothesis Two:

The academic achievement of Black Students is enhanced for those Black students that experience in the home high academic achievement as a highly valued standard of performance and as a very high priority for investments of family resources on the part of parents (or parent surrogates).

Table C. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last Year and ‘My Parents Don’t Pay Much Attention’—Black Students

‘My Parents Don’t Pay Much Attention’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Strongly Agree	2.4995	22	.84650	.18047
Agree	2.4558	38	.76381	.12391
Disagree	2.6064	103	.78033	.07689
Strongly Disagree	2.6523	224	.70913	.04738
Total	2.6121	387	.74189	.03771

No statistically significant

Table D. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last Year by ‘My Parents Don’t Pay Much Attention’—Whites Students

‘My Parents Don’t Pay Much Attention’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Strongly Agree	2.8861	41	1.01211	.15807
Agree	3.2596	140	.66344	.05607
Disagree	3.2559	487	.67588	.03063
Strongly Disagree	3.3119	597	.65554	.02683
Total	3.2708	1265	.68175	.01917

Statistically Significant (p .001)

Table E. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last Year and ‘Number Of Books At Home’—Black Students

‘Number of Books At Home’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
1= 0 to 10	2.3003	31	.91566	.16446
2= 11-24	2.4207	40	.81177	.12835
3= 25-100	2.5575	138	.77763	.06620
4= 100-250	2.6112	91	.61537	.06451
5= More than 250	2.7972	97	.70327	.07141
Total	2.5945	397	.75101	.03769

No Statistical Significance

Table F. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last Year and ‘Number Of Books At Home’—White Students

‘Number of Books At Home’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
1= 0 to 10	2.9171	14	.97606	.26086
2= 11-24	2.5755	20	.91726	.20511
3= 25-100	3.0024	131	.73796	.06448
4= 100-250	3.1387	306	.68421	.03911
5= More than 250	3.3897	806	.62286	.02194
Total	3.2719	1277	.68105	.01906

Statistical Significance (p < .01)

Hypothesis Three:

The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and do associate with peers who value and invest in such achievement.

Table G. –Correlation of mean Student GPA Last Year and ‘Positive Peer Pressure’ Regarding Achievement’

BLACK	Student GPA Last Term	‘Positive Peer Pressure’
GPA Last Term	1.00	-.087
N	397	396
‘Positive Peer Pressure’	-.087	1.00
N	396	413
WHITE		
GPA Last Term	1.00	.203**
N	1277	1275
‘Positive Peer Pressure’	.203**	1.00
N	1275	1311

Hypothesis Four:

The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those Black students who can identify and who do utilize academic support services at the school and in the school community.

Table H. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last term and ‘How Many Hours Per Week Do You Get Tutoring Or Extra Academic Help From Teachers, Tutors Or Older Students During Free Periods Or Outside Of School Hours’—Black Students

‘How Many Hours Per Week...’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
1= No Time	2.6621	204	.74502	.05216
2= Half an Hour	2.5243	54	.70801	.09635
3= 1 Hour	2.3180	55	.69255	.09338
4= 2 Hours	2.8036	39	.86741	.13890
5= 3-4 Hours	2.4894	31	.70333	.12632
6= 5-7 Hours	2.9162	8	.77168	.27283
7= 8+ Hours	1.9967	3	.57735	.33333
Total	2.5957	394	.75288	.03793

Statistical Significant (p < .011)

Table I. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last Term ‘How Many Hours Per Week Do You Get Tutoring Or Extra Academic Help From Teachers, Tutors Or Older Students During Free Periods Or Outside Of School Hours’—White Students

‘How Many Hours Per Week...’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
1= No Time	3.3059	836	.67293	.02327
2= Half an Hour	3.3571	167	.59566	.04609
3= 1 Hour	3.1667	126	.70258	.06259
4= 2 Hours	3.1786	71	.63484	.07534
5= 3-4 Hours	2.9773	44	.70601	.10643
6= 5-7 Hours	2.5464	11	.76411	.23039
7= 8+ Hours	2.6818	11	1.23499	.32736
Total	3.2682	1266	.68124	.01915

Statistically Significant (p < .000)

Hypothesis Five:

The academic achievement of Black students is enhanced for those students who experience strongly supportive interactions with key classroom teachers and dean counselors.

Table J. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last term and ‘I Don’t Feel Close To Any Of My Teachers This Year’—Black Students

‘I Don’t Feel Close To Any...’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Strongly Agree	2.5485	41	.82513	.12886
Agree	2.5315	121	.78204	.07109
Disagree	2.6312	186	.72771	.05336
Strongly Disagree	2.7120	40	.71514	.11307
Total	2.5997	388	.75380	.03827

No Statistical Significance

Table J. –Analysis of Variance by Mean Student GPA Last term and ‘I Don’t Feel Close To Any Of My Teachers This Year’—White Students

‘I Don’t Feel Close To Any...’	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Strongly Agree	3.0483	76	.78824	.09042
Agree	3.1801	360	.68432	.03607
Disagree	3.3226	689	.66102	.02518
Strongly Disagree	3.3754	145	.66565	.05528
Total	3.2718	1270	.68146	.01912

Statistical Significant ($p < .000$)

APPENDIX N
DISCIPLINE SYSTEM DATA

Table A. --Discipline and Weighted GPA for White Female and Male Students

Discipline Record 00-01	Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
No disc record	F	3.71938	525	.760195	.033178
	M	3.28897	426	.838478	.040624
	Total	3.52657	951	.824097	.026723
Warning	F	2.89287	30	.858352	.156713
	M	2.81150	52	.841936	.116756
	Total	2.84127	82	.843596	.093160
Detention	F	2.89107	44	.906954	.136728
	M	2.76906	83	.798099	.087603
	Total	2.81133	127	.835850	.074170
Single ISS or ASP	F	2.67400	30	.823096	.150276
	M	2.37819	47	.663983	.096852
	Total	2.49344	77	.739217	.084242
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	F	2.02211	19	.691363	.158610
	M	1.80058	33	.724374	.126097
	Total	1.88152	52	.713819	.098989
OSS or Multiple OSS	F	1.34500	1		
	M	2.80783	6	.810641	.330943
	Total	2.59886	7	.923749	.349144
Total	F	3.52334	649	.884279	.034711
	M	3.03736	647	.909484	.035755
	Total	3.28073	1296	.928972	.025805

ANOVA

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Weighted GPA 01 * Discipline Record 00-01	Between Groups	(Combine d)	254.083	5	50.817	75.91 7	.000
	Within Groups		863.488	12 90	.669		
	Total		1117.57 1	12 95			

Table B. –Discipline and Weighted GPA for Black Female and Male Students

Discipline Record 00-01	Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
No disc record	F	2.77763	134	.826340	.071385
	M	2.36694	99	.910348	.091493
	Total	2.60313	233	.884825	.057967
Warning	F	2.46833	18	.720438	.169809
	M	2.26832	19	.531024	.121825
	Total	2.36562	37	.629574	.103501
Detention	F	2.06878	51	.558305	.078178
	M	1.95730	50	.608225	.086016
	Total	2.01359	101	.583318	.058042
Single ISS or ASP	F	1.97000	19	.694762	.159389
	M	1.78875	32	.592900	.104811
	Total	1.85627	51	.632101	.088512
Multiple ISS and/or ASP	F	1.75420	15	.641298	.165582
	M	1.45816	49	.635801	.090829
	Total	1.52755	64	.644486	.080561
OSS or Multiple OSS	F	1.98633	12	.382726	.110484
	M	1.76656	9	.726813	.242271
	Total	1.89214	21	.551622	.120374
Total	F	2.44867	249	.821348	.052051
	M	2.01503	258	.813267	.050632
	Total	2.22800	507	.844783	.037518

ANOVA

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Weighted GPA 01 * Discipline Record 00-01	Between Groups	(Combine d)	78.948	5	15.790	28.03 6	.000
	Within Groups		282.162	50 1	.563		
	Total		361.111	50 6			

Table C. Three-Year Discipline Data for Black Females, 1999-2002

BLACK FEMALE TOP 5 REASONS		
1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Verbal Abuse (22)	Failure to Serve Detention (25)	Failure to Serve Detention (22)
Fighting (18)	Verbal Abuse (20)	Verbal Abuse (19)
Defiance (16)	Gross Misconduct (18)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (17)
Failure to Serve ASP (15)	Defiance, Fighting	Fighting (15)
Truancy (11)	Failure to Serve ASP (14)	Failure to Serve ASP (13)

Table D. Three-Year Discipline Data for Black Males, 1999-2002

BLACK MALE TOP 5 REASONS		
1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Verbal Abuse (73)	Defiance (111)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (76)
Defiance (71)	Aggressive Behavior (107)	Verbal Abuse (53)
Failure to Serve ASP (54)	Verbal Abuse (93)	Failure to Serve Detention (46)
Aggressive Behavior (50)	Failure to Serve Detention (69)	Failure to Serve ASP (44)
Failure to Serve Detention (35)	Disruptive (58)	Defiance (36)

Table E. Three-Year Discipline Data for White Females, 1999-2002

WHITE FEMALE TOP 5 REASONS		
1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Smoking (26)	Smoking (36)	Smoking (19)
Truancy (12)	Truancy (16)	Beeper (9)
Verbal Abuse (9)	Failure To Serve ASP (14)	Verbal Abuse (4)
Attendance, Beeper (6) *tied	Attendance (10)	Under the Influence of Alcohol/Drugs (3)
Under the Influence of Alcohol/Drugs (5) *tied	Failure to Serve Detention (10)	Failure to Serve Detention; Leaving School w/o Permission; Fighting; Weapon; Failure to Serve ASP (2) *tied

Table F. Three-Year Discipline Data for White Males, 1999-2002

WHITE MALE TOP 5 REASONS		
1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Smoking (33)	Smoking (48)	Failure to Serve Detention (40)
Failure to Serve ASP (24)	Verbal Abuse (37)	Smoking (30)
Aggressive Physical Behavior (20)	Failure to Serve Detention (33)	Verbal Abuse (28)
Defiance (18)	Defiance (30)	Failure to Serve ASP (25)
Verbal Abuse (17)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (24)	Aggressive Physical Behavior (23)

