

Abstract

DISSERTATION: Exploring the Experiences of African American Males in a Single-Gender Charter School

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This qualitative case study is focused on the success of a charter single-gender middle school for African American males in the Midwest from the years 2012-2016. Indiana Department of Education data showed this small middle school with 100% African American Male was ranked 55 out of 2000 middle schools across the state. During the 2013-2014 school year, its second year of operation, Male Prep Academy received an A rating from the state based on academic growth. The school would win four A ratings in a row. The school consistently exceeded statewide data and neighboring Indianapolis Public school data. With 75.6 percent passing both sections of the ISTEP 80.7 percent ELA and 87 percent Math. This dissertation identified seven emergent themes: scholar identity, celebrating academic achievement, otherfathering, rigorous curriculum, participation in school sponsored activities, strong leadership, and relationships. The key themes and factor for success yielded from the perspectives of past school administrators, teachers, parents, and students. I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews to compare themes and determine the factors that lead to these students being prepared for a rigorous high school and early college experience. As stakeholders seek options to support the academic success for Black male student, the Prep offers a template for success. This schooling model prepared many of its

students for selective college admission. In this case study, Prep is reviewed for the elements that could lead to a successful high school and college experience.

Keywords: Black males, disproportionality in special education, the pedagogy of confidence, single-gender middle schools, black male success