

# San Bernardino Community College District

## A CALL TO ACTION

Thursday, April 21, 2011

### Meeting Notes

#### Introduction

The work revolved around the five questions below. Each group, after discussion, provided collective insight by responding to the questions. The responses will be clustered into focus areas of concentration for further team work.

#### The Questions

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

**Question 5:** What else would you like to add?

**GROUP #1 (blended all five questions together)**

1. Most parents don't understand data and how it relates to their children. Need to educate parents and simplify message.
2. Need to work at foundation level with the family. Start with the family and when children are young (age 3). Instill core values of education in family. "Education is the only equalizer."
3. Need to package a message to community that education is the most important thing: media, money, advertise, get Oprah to sell message, need a plan to sell education like Budweiser's plan for selling beer.
4. "Parents are most important."
5. Need to "rebrand" education with parents and children.

**GROUP #2 (questions #1 to 4)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Intimidated
- Parents
- Low teacher expectations
- Discipline issues
- New tolerance & lack of support system

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Come unprepared
- Low study habits
- Poor support system/accountability

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Celebrate academics
- Empower parents; advocates
- New culture/new name/break cycle

**Question 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Promote parent participation
- “Takes a Village”; investing in the community; participate

### **GROUP #3 (questions # 1 to 3)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- High school--student gets passed along ill prepared for high school, which reflects on the commitment of instructor of the high school.
- Students don't get instilled the lessons. Students shouldn't be taught to pass.
- Schools are over populated in the classroom, which represents the lack of attention to the students.
- African-Americans have to gain responsibility. Produce an appropriate environment for education. African-Americans have to take on a greater level of control over academics.

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Society needs to get involved at an early age to supervise and advise youth to excel in education.
- Develop a mechanism for African-Americans to be successful. It should be done by people who are from similar backgrounds and who they can identify with.
- More positive role models and mentors.
- Early intervention.
- Community collaboration.
- Rooted in the family and faith-based organizations.
- Problem of influence. Address issues of the family unit.
- We (parents) within ourselves don't promote education properly to our children.

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Instructors should motivate students to have an appetite to learn.
- Teacher/professor to be more connected and motivated to inspire students.
- Language
- Tumaimi
- Give testimony
- Game – I never met anyone who felt comfortable/confident in playing Monopoly if they didn't know the rules.

**GROUP #4**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- a) Family structure
- b) Filling the void

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- a) Unconcerned teachers
- b) Lack of parenting

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- a) Stop teaching to the test (K-12)
- b) Teach academics with zeal

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- a) Improve communication
- b) Don't have a "spirit of fear"

**Question 5:** What else would you like to add?

- a) Incorporate social learning (K-12) in curriculum.

**GROUP #5 (questions # 1 to 4)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Mediocrity in K-12
- School systems not understanding African-American culture
- Parent involvement
- Children dialect
- Transit population
- Teacher burn out
- Social promotion

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Too many students are going to school to play sports.
- Discouragement to succeed because of race and social status.
- Discouragement in a child's time away from school with parents and friends.
- Knowledge of community colleges and financial support systems.
- Students need to believe they can succeed.

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Support system programs.
- Mandatory mentoring groups.
- Lack of knowledge of Tumaini and Puente.
- Parent orientation
  - Community Christian College

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Give more time
- Personally mentor
- Students must know their goal
- Church motivating students by example and prayer
- Adults counseling college students on their need to get through college – teach them how to be an adult and respectful student
- Reward student success

### **GROUP #7**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Poor teacher/student relationships
- Low expectations
- Practical application of what is being done
- Culturally responsive/relevant pedagogy
- Foundational building of concepts
- Lack of accountability

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Disengaged from lessons
- Lack in preparation K-12
- Socio-economic impacts
- Access to social support systems

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Increase accountability at all levels – P through 16.
- Make education relevant to the lives of students.
- Multiple pathways for educating students.
- Real world applications and real world biases.

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Work collaboratively.
- Affect your own sphere of influence.

**Question 5:** What else would you like to add?

- Place leaders in place that are bold enough to make needed changes.

**GROUP #8 (questions # 1 to 4)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Students' basic skill levels are marginalized in high school system – not addressed and passed on.
- Parents are not informed enough on how to identify low skill (application levels) to intervene.

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Lack of intra/inter communication skills. Comfort level/confidence level.
- Ability to seek support.

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Provide support systems and accountability of those systems.

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Arrange a meeting with stakeholders to discuss streamline programs to more efficiently use funds.

**GROUP #9 (questions # 1 to 4)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Parent involvement (limited)
- Economics (limited)
- Basic skills (reduced but needed in schools)
- Supplemental academic assistance (limited)
- Community education/advocate for parents & students
- Community impact (church/clubs/etc.)

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Mentors/counseling/self-confidence is low for students
- Better relationships with instructors

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Community exposure and support
- Working together
- Avoiding judgment and come together for the cause of education/empowerment
- Workshops

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Adopt a school
- Share your knowledge with others
- Provide direction to resources
- Help build self-esteem in students and parents

**GROUP #10**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- Many students “don’t care” about grades until graduation – friends are more important.
- More emphasis put on tutoring with AVID students than general population.
- Parents are not pushing them.

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Homes not having college as high priority.
- State budget – schools no high priority.

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- Organizations need to mentor.
- Organizations plus schools need to connect real world to academic success.
- Do not teach to test.

**Questions 4:** What can you personally do to help improve African American student success rates?

- Help African-American students connect the dots on why they are in school and the reality of capitalistic society.
- Learn self-advocacy for improving teachers and schools (products).

**Question 5:** What else would you like to add?

- Critical thinking
- Collaboration – people skills
- STEM (science/technology/engineering/math)
- Business take ownership

**GROUP #11 (questions # 1 to 3)**

**Question 1:** Generally speaking, why do African American students come to college less prepared in Math and English?

- K-12 – not prepared.
- Need to read by the third grade.
- Pre-school issue: poverty, family, transiency.
- Services for families – low expectations, stereotype children, all children need to be served.
- Parents reading to children (at birth) is needed.
- K-12 has limits on them due to standards.
- Mismatch in post-secondary expectations.
- In California, per student cost is one of the lowest.
- Need top decision makers at the table, e.g., District superintendents.
- One in eight African-American males go to “jail” nationally.
- Three things: policy issues, poverty issues, family literacy.
- What is the narrative we tell our African-American child? i.e., helping families support and advocate for their children.
- Peer pressure.
- Negative influences.
- Students not focused on education.
- Needs at elementary level – focus.
- Role models needed – SBVC going to elementary schools.
- Need to teach from understanding of diverse needs.

**Question 2:** Once in college, why do African American students have lower success rates in both Basic Skills and non-basic skills courses?

- Lack of leaders/faculty who look like African-American students.
- Don't feel like they are cared for.
- Students don't see African-American models and diversity.
- Need support programs that also support their culture. They don't make it without it.
- Fully developed programs to work together – e.g., Puente Program at SBVC. Full support to make it go.

**Question 3:** What can we do, as educational organizations, to help improve African American student success rates?

- SBVC African-American role models doing site visits at elementary schools.
- Hire parents to be educational advocates. Community members that are in that neighborhood.
- Mapping of services from across San Bernardino.
- City and county-wide plan . Build critical mass with city leaders.
- Empowering the community – SBCSS programs through community and faith-based organizations: 12 Powers of Family Business in San Bernardino Diocese.
- Joyce Epstein Framework of Parent-Trainer. Parent Engagement of Trainer program to empower parents to lead other parents in their communities. Make this a city-wide imperative! Put system in place with a city plan and everyone knowing their roles of support and do it. E.g., vision 20/20 at San Bernardino county EDA. Where do we connect?
- Community labs – SBVC faculty serve in the community.
- Education needs to be valued by families.
- Making right choices in their lives.
- SBVC adopt a school program – faculty visiting children of color. Faith based can do this as well.