

PITT COUNTY COALITION FOR EDUCATING BLACK CHILDREN

“Impact Areas for Improving School Performance”

COALITION ACTION AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children adopted this action agenda composed of seven (7) impact areas at its December 11, 2006 General Meeting. We have set goals in these impact areas and propose to discuss these impact areas with Pitt County School Officials to set joint goals to improve the academic achievement of African American students. These impact areas presented below are intended to be used for discussion to formulate a joint action agenda for the Pitt County Schools and the African American community.

SEVEN (7) IMPACT AREAS

I. SCHOOL READINESS

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified school readiness as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Public Schools. Many African American students start school without having first developed cognitive skills and the self-discipline necessary for success in the public school setting under the current middleclass values and standards that govern the system. Consequently, many African American students start out behind and never catch up.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of school readiness and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To promote the concept and skills sets of school readiness within the African American community targeting parents, grandparents, day care programs, and others who interact with children ages 0-5 on a regular basis whom may facilitate the development of African American children.
- (2) To promote, within the African American community, the programs, techniques, and technologies of the *Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential* and particularly the programs known as “*How to Teach Baby to Read,*” “*How to Teach Baby Math,*” “*How to give your Child Encyclopedic Knowledge,*” and “*How to make Baby Physically Superb.*”
- (3) To build a coalition for African American parents, community leaders, day care providers, clergy, church leaders, and others to promote the programs, techniques, and technologies of the *Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential* and other pre-school educational opportunities for African American children ages 0-5.
- (4) To promote a legislative agenda to adopt federal, state, and local legislation that requires governmental support for school readiness programs.
- (5) To promote the concept of school readiness to private foundations, charitable trust, and other non-profits funding sources encouraging them to adopt school readiness as a major focus area and giving them priority.

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- (6) To promote a proposal that Pitt County Schools develop pre-school centers in every school attendance area in Pitt County.

II. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified parental involvement as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Public Schools. Research demonstrates that children are more likely to succeed in the public education system when their parents are actively involved and play a significant supporting role in the educational process.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of parental involvement and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To promote, within the African American community, the need for parental involvement in the public education process including but not limited to checking homework, establishing a regular after school study schedule, making regular contacts with teachers and school staff to monitor each child's progress, and setting high expectations and discipline for educational achievement.
- (2) To promote a policy within the Pitt County Schools that establishes a minimum criteria or protocol for teachers and schools in reaching out to parents including parents conferences prior to the start of the school year, written communications, telephone contacts, emails, face-to-face contacts, regular parent workshops, and end of year awards and conferences.
- (3) To provide educational opportunities for parents, grandparents, and other care givers to increase their knowledge and effectiveness in playing an educational support role.
- (4) To promote a legislative agenda to require federal, state, and local support for parental involvement as educational support for student achievement.
- (5) To promote parent involvement programs as priority projects for private foundations, charitable trust, and other charitable activity.

III. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified school discipline as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Schools. The incidence of school violence and crime are significant. The disproportionately high incidence of use of school suspensions raise concerns about the use of suspension as a school policy. The overall quality of school discipline must be improved.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of school discipline and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To investigate the impact of zero tolerance school discipline policies and review possible alternative school discipline policies.

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- (2) To promote a teacher surveillance program to identify teachers who excessively make discipline referrals and target such teachers for continuing education training in effective classroom management and culturally responsive teaching strategies.
- (3) To promote the creation of an in-district security force in lieu of armed Resource Officers in grades K-12.
- (4) To promote conflict resolution training and develop teams of parents and volunteers to work to reduce negative influences that filter into the schools from neighborhoods.
- (5) To promote the use of alternative discipline strategies to include: in school time out; in school study; and other methods in lieu of suspension and make the goal of discipline improved educational achievement.
- (6) To conduct a study of school suspension to determine what factors contribute to the disproportionately high number of suspensions of African American children and to review alternative means of discipline (this study should include a determination of whether cultural or racial insensitivity is a factor that contributes to the high suspension rates of African American children).
- (7) To develop and conduct a program, policy, and procedure to educate parents about the school discipline process.

IV. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified special programs as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Schools. A disproportionately high percentage of students referred for behavioral related special education programs are African American. These numbers would not be so high if schools and teachers adopted a culturally responsive approach to student behaviors. Many gifted and talented African American students are not recognized due to cultural bias.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of special programs and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To educate African American parents about the rules and criteria for identification and placement of their children in special education programs.
- (2) To promote policies that hold the schools accountable to achieve measurable results, with appropriate documentation, for students who are placed in special education programs and all placements should include exit strategies.
- (3) To promote the creation of gifted and talented programs that utilize art, drama, dance, theaters, sports and other talents as media for academic education.
- (4) To monitor the abuse of special education programs and supplemental funding to assure that children who are classified/identified as special education students obtain the services they are entitled to receive and that results are achieved.

V. CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified curriculum and instruction as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Public Schools. Curriculum and instructional programs must be relevant to African American students and contain elements that build their self-esteem and promote a positive self-concept.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of curriculum and instruction and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To promote the use of curriculum supplements that promote the learning of Black contributions in the areas of science, math, literature, engineering, art, music, dance, drama, and all areas of curriculum.
- (2) To promote the use of learning resources that reflects student's cultures.
- (3) To promote teacher training to improve their understanding of diverse cultures.
- (4) To promote the up-date of the State of North Carolina curriculum.
- (5) To promote that all teachers receiving training in Black History and culture and their use in building the self-esteem of African American children and student achievement.
- (6) To promote use of technology wherever possible in providing classroom instruction.

VI. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified the achievement gap as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Schools. African American students experience a significant achievement gap in reading, math, and science.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of the academic achievement gap and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To promote academic success among African American children and youth by conducting community and church based reading, math, science, spelling, and other academic contest.
- (2) To promote academic success by training teachers and parents to increase academic achievement expectations for African American students.
- (3) To promote academic success by improving the self-image of African American students by teaching Black History and culture including Black achievement in math, science, literature, art, reading, etc.
- (4) To promote academic success by improve classroom management and maximizing time on task and setting standards for teacher output.

VII. DIVERSITY

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has identified diversity as a significant impact area for improving the performance of African American students in the Pitt County Schools. Lack of diversity can lead to isolationism (segregation) and adversely impact the self-esteem of African American students and reduce student achievement.

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children has set the following goals with respect to the issue of diversity and proposes that Pitt County Schools adopt the same.

- (1) To assure that all Pitt County Schools are substantially equal in terms of allocation of district resources, including but not limited to the qualifications of teachers, facilities, instructional materials, supplemental funding sources, and other factors.
- (2) To insure that all teachers are skilled in culturally responsive teaching including knowledge of, and respect for, Black cultural heritage.
- (3) To insure that all instructional materials include the representation of Black achievements and historical contributions.
- (4) To insure that positive elements of Black history and culture are used and promoted by teachers and school staff to improve positive self-images, and discipline of African American students.
- (5) To promote diversity by promoting a healthy working knowledge of Black achievements and the story of the Black Experience.
- (6) To promote diversity by actively promoting diversity in school based committees and organizations such as School Improvement Team, PTA, PTSA, Exceptional Children Advisory Councils, etc.
- (7) Full implementation of a Culturally Responsive Teaching Policy that includes comprehensive staff development of all Pitt County School Teachers and Staff.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO JOIN US!

Visit us on the worldwide web at:

<http://pccebc.org/default.aspx>

Write:

**PITT COUNTY COALITION
FOR EDUCATING BLACK CHILDREN**

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Winterville, NC 28590

Attention: Rev. Ozie Lee Hall, Jr., President

“Join the Fight for Educational Excellence”