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ABSTRACT

The perceptions of students about caring teachers were studied in secondary Catholic and public magnet schools. Both types of schools were schools of choice, attended through student and family choice and not assignment by neighborhood. The sample for the study came from a national, federally funded project that studied the relationship between family choice and school responsiveness. The larger sample consisted of interviews with 300 high school seniors and their parents and 100 school teachers, counselors, and administrators. For this study, interviews from 88 African American students were used. The students attended four urban Catholic high schools, two public single-focus (one theme) urban magnet high schools, and two public multifocus (several areas of concentration) urban magnet high schools. Data were analyzed separately based on school type. The concept groups of "expectations," "encouraging," and "challenging" were emphasized in the conversations of students from all three types of schools, suggesting that these behaviors are consistent in defining caring for students in all the school types. Students from Catholic schools tended to associate helping and involving with caring teacher behavior more often than students in the public schools. The concept of relationship was mentioned more by Catholic school students and students from single-focus magnets. Concern was mentioned more often by Catholic and multifocus school students. It is suggested that students in Catholic high schools may have more personal interaction with parents and teachers and may expect and value such interaction more as indicative of caring. (Contains 4 tables and 30 references.) (SLD)

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CARING TEACHER BEHAVIORS IN CATHOLIC AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF CHOICE

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Introduction

The dismal failure of African-American students to achieve in America's public schools is well documented. On every indicator of academic achievement, African-American students' performance lags behind that of their white and Asian peers (e.g., Irvine, 1990: Irvine & Foster, 1996). While attempts have been made to raise the achievement levels of African-American students, including but not limited to desegregation and compensatory programs, magnet schools, charter schools, and programs that include an emphasis on Afrocentric curriculum, school achievement gains have been modest and inconsistent over time (Irvine & Foster, 1996).

The research literature on African-American school achievement indicates a strong positive relationship between students and the contexts of the school and classroom environments in which they study. Several common themes within a school appear to enhance African-American achievement including strong instructional leadership, high expectations, close monitoring, clear goals, discipline, and a safe and orderly environment (e.g., Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Lee & Wilson, 1988). Within the classroom, the teacher is the key. Walker (1993) found that the success of African-American teachers was related more to their interpersonal caring than to a particular method or style of teaching. Irvine (1996) concluded that teachers in African-American Catholic schools, although at times harsh in their discipline, were viewed by their students and parents as committed to the academic success of their students. While there are some anecdotal accounts of the experiences of African-American students in Catholic schools, little systematic

study has been done to determine how commitment becomes caring, how teachers exhibit this type of caring, and how it is perceived by their African-American students.

The primary purpose of this study was to describe "caring" teachers as perceived by African-American students in both secondary Catholic and public magnet schools. We were interested in knowing if there were any perceived differences in the execution or incorporation of an ethic of caring in Catholic as compared to public magnet schools, particularly since caring teachers appear to be associated with the high rate of success of African-American students in Catholic schools. The secondary purpose of this study was to discuss implications of teacher caring for school reform, especially where African-American students are concerned, and to indicate future research on the concept of teacher caring in schools.

Theoretical Framework

A number of theoretical perspectives related to caring can be identified in the literature. These are of three types: cultural, feminist, and humanistic. The cultural mode, derived from anthropological and sociological perspectives, views caring as essential to survival of all human beings and recognizes how caring differs in various cultural contexts (Leininger, 1984). The feminist model, exemplified in the work of Noddings (1984), is derived from sociological and philosophical perspectives. It focuses on the moral and ethical aspects of caring. In the humanistic mode, caring is viewed as a value and an attitude which manifests itself in caregiving behaviors. Humanistic caring tends to reflect many of the moral/ethical perspectives of the feminist mode, but tends toward gender neutrality.

Moffett (1994) developed a conceptual framework for understanding the concept of caring among those in the caring professions (e.g., teaching, nursing, social work). She envisions caring as multifacted including affective, cognitive, and behavioral components and as context-specific. Studies of caring in teachers tend to focus on teacher behaviors that include excellent organization and time management skills, attempts to match instructional objectives to students' ability, and lack of attention to routine tasks (Irvine, 1990). Much of the literature on African-American students suggests that they value teachers who are directive and "in-charge" (Walker, 1992). However, some literature on African-American students contends that it is through the affective domain of teaching that students engage in classroom learning (Walker, 1992). This would include values, beliefs, attitudes and interests of teachers toward their students that might be expressed through interpersonal sensitivity and personal support.

Marchant (1990) stresses an interactive approach on the part of teachers as a way of aiding African-American students in the development of intrinsic motivation and positive self-perception that is vital to students' achievement. A less frequently-treated area of caring is the cognitive domain that emphasizes the knowledge and skills necessary to enable teachers to be competent caregivers. These would include receptivity, professional commitment, responsiveness, and the ability to support students in their academic work. While both affective and cognitive domains reflect notions of caring "about" as well as caring "for" others, each does so, perhaps, somewhat differently. Moffett (1994) acknowledges the interactive nature of behavioral, affective, and cognitive components of caring.

Many authors including Boateng (1990), Haynes and Comer (1990), and Irvine (1990) have identified *teacher behavior* as one of the major forces influencing areas such as achievement, innovation, and the development of multicultural programs. Furthermore, Irvine (1990) suggests that the underachievement of some African-Americans can be linked to the overall effectiveness of the teacher. Many of the characteristics that comprise teacher effectiveness for minority students are identified by Irvine (1990) and include: high expectations for students, an unwillingness to ascribe blame to external factors, a philosophy of teaching that promotes "the development of intellectual habits through practice [rather than] mere coverage of materials" (p.94), excellent organization and time management skills, attempt to match instructional objectives to students' ability, and lack of attention to routine tasks. Additionally, a growing body of research indicates that an interactive or active approach to teaching which involves "relentless levels of energy and exuberance" (Irvine, 1990) correlates positively and significantly with the success/achievement of African-American students (Gerstein & Keating, 1987).

Van Galen (1993) identifies specific teacher behaviors perceived as caring within a traditionally Catholic school. These included the willingness of teacher to put forth extra effort on behalf of students, the warmth and humor with which teachers conducted their classes, and the personal involvement of teachers with students' many extracurricular activities. Van Galen (1993) noted that the three factors of personalized help, humor, and involvement are consistent along ethnic and gender lines as indications of a teacher's behavior as caring. The act of caring, however, is actually played out differently along these same lines.

Van Galen (1993) suggests that "what is perceived as 'caring' by those involved actually serves to reinforce and reproduce traditional class, race, and gender roles among the students" (p.2).

Most scholars agree that defining what caring means is a complex task. Dempsey and Noblit (1993) suggest that caring is contextual and that "people construct caring in relationships even as they construct their definition of what it is to care" (p. 48). Noddings (1984) suggests that the "one-caring desires the well-being of the cared-for" (p.24); however, she cautions that "caring cannot be achieved by formula. It requires address and response: it requires different behaviors from situation to situation and person to person" (Noddings, 1992, p. 44).

Similarly, Webb et al. (1993) suggest that "groups [of people]-- influenced by personal biographies and cultural histories--do not necessarily see the caring in each others' actions" (p. 44). Such an argument lends credibility to the need for examining students' perceptions of caring teacher behaviors. For as Webb, et al. (1993) state "caring means nothing unless it means something to both, or all, parties involved in the action" (p. 44). Furthermore, Weinstein (1983) states that "researchers have only recently begun to understand that students' and adults' points of view about school and classroom reality may not be synonymous" (p. 288).

Caring in Catholic and Public Schools

The following question guided this study: Are there differences in secondary students' perceptions of caring teacher behavior in Catholic compared to public magnet schools? We

chose to compare Catholic secondary with public magnet schools because these public schools share an important common characteristic--school choice. All students included in this study were in their schools by choice, not by neighborhood assignment. We realize, however, that there are other characteristics that distinguish these school types such as their organizational structure. Nonetheless, we anticipated that this comparison would provide some beginning insights into how African-American students view their teachers' caring behaviors.

The research on Catholic schools emphasizes the social relationships that these schools appear to foster. Coleman & Hoffer (1987) describe private schools as being somewhat of an "extension of the family" (p.5) while the public school is more of an "emancipation of the child from the family" (p.5). While fundamentally, this may seem like a false dichotomy, conflict exists between the two points due to pluralism. Additionally, Coleman & Hoffer (1987) speak in terms of three types of schools: the public, the Catholic, and other private schools. In general, Coleman and Hoffer (1987) found that "private schools tend to be smaller and enroll much larger proportions of their students in academic programs of study. Within curriculum programs, private, particularly Catholic, school students take more academic courses and fewer vocational courses" (p.56).

Kosman and Lachman (1993) provide a summary of achievement statistics concerning the relationship between African-American performance and Catholic schools. They report that increasing numbers of African-Americans seek a Catholic parochial school education for their children even while they themselves remain Protestant. However, in an examination of African-American Catholics in Catholic schools, they found that more African-American

Catholics are graduates from high school and college than are African-Americans in general. Their educational attainment is roughly equal to other Catholics and greater than the overall American average regardless of race. Furthermore, proportionately fewer African-American Catholics drop out of high school compared with either the total African-American population or the overall white population and they are 40 percent more likely to graduate from college than other African-Americans.

The findings of Kosman and Lachman (1993) are consistent with those of other studies such as Bryk, Holland, Lee & Carriendo (1984), Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore (1982); Greely (1982) and Keith & Page (1985) which have concluded that "the difference between the achievement of white and minority students is smaller in Catholic [schools] than [in] public schools" (Lee & Wilson, 1988 p.11). In fact, Greely (1982) has concluded that "[t]he effect of Catholic schools seems to be especially powerful on the multiply disadvantaged--minority students whose parents did not attend college, who themselves have not qualified for academic programs" (p.108). Therefore, given this so-called "Catholic school effect," it was of particular interest in this study to determine whether African-American students in Catholic schools held perceptions of teacher caring different from their counterparts in public schools.

Methodology

Data Sources

The sample used in this study comes from a national, federally-funded project that investigated the relationship between family choice and school responsiveness. The larger sample consists of interviews with 300 high school seniors and their parents, 100 high school

teachers, counselors, and administrators from 20 schools in three large northern cities. The project included 10 public and 10 Catholic high schools of choice in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Washington, DC. The sample was socioeconomically diverse with a predominately minority population. The project's purpose was to determine under what conditions a congruence occurs between what parents want from schools and what schools offer including the kinds of experiences students have in school. The data base includes face-to-face student, teacher, and administrator interviews, telephone interviews with parents, classroom observations, student transcripts, and school documents. For the study reported here, interview transcript data for 88 (male = 42; female = 46) African-American senior students were coded and analyzed (Table 1). Students were distributed evenly across magnet and Catholic schools.

(Table 1)

Semi-structured interviews were designed to motivate students to reveal views about their high school experiences. They were asked to respond to questions such as, "What is it like to be a student in this school?," "In what ways has this school helped you?," "Do you think this school has held you back in any way?," "Are there any teachers or counselors you can think of who helped you?," "How much does this school care about you getting good grades, obeying school rules, having friends?" These questions and prompts from the interviewer resulted in students' elaborated responses about the school and their perceptions of how the school and teachers exhibited caring behavior toward them. Demographic information was gathered from the students' transcripts and analyzed to identify student gender and ethnicity.

The Schools

This study focuses on three types of schools of choice: Catholic, single-focus magnet, and multifocus magnet public schools in three different "markets" or cities. In Chicago and Washington, DC, where parents have access to all three types of schools, data were collected in "triplets," (i.e., Catholic, single-focus magnet, multi-focus magnet). That is, an effort was made to select schools that were in close proximity to one another in order to minimize differences in student populations. From the 20 schools studied, four Catholic and two each of single-focus and multi-focus magnet schools were chosen because they served a substantial proportion of African-American students.

The four urban Catholic schools serve lower-to-middle-class students and range in size from 40-to-700 students with an average of 12% of families with incomes below the poverty level. Three of the schools are private and one is a diocesan Catholic school. The diocesan school serves 99% of African-American students, while the three private schools serve 86%, 54% and 100% of African-American students, respectively. The four Catholic schools enroll 100% of their student body in college preparatory or academic programs.

The two single-focus magnet schools are organized academically around a single theme and have the smallest enrollments among the schools in the study. One focuses on college preparatory programs, serving 374 students of whom 100% are African-American. Approximately 10% of the students come from families below the poverty level.

The second school focuses its programs on the performing arts. It serves 440 students from middle and lower income families, of whom 98% are African-American. Approximately 40% of the students come from families below the poverty level.

The two multi-focus magnet schools are large, comprehensive high schools each serving approximately 2,000 students. One serves 73% African-American students of whom 25% come from families with incomes below the poverty level. The other serves 81% African-American students of whom 25% come from families with incomes below the poverty level. Both schools have multiple programs ranging from college preparatory to vocational and remedial programs. The majority of students are enrolled in programs designated for students who attend the schools by neighborhood assignment (Table 1).

Data Analysis

The researchers read and coded the student interviews. Conceptual labels were identified for the wide range of responses that were given by the students. The initial coding process yielded an extremely large number of concepts that were then grouped together on the basis of provisional relationships (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researchers then developed categories that seemed to emerge from the repeated examinations of the transcripts and the conceptual labels. Many categories were identified from the initial screening. At this point, the researchers began to identify the categories that could possibly yield information pertaining to caring. Some of the initial categories that seemed to pertain to caring included: (1) "teacher intervention for helping students," (2) "teacher attitudes/motivation/caring," (3) "teacher expectations," (4) "social relations/social climate/sense of community," and (5) "student

perceptions/evaluation of school/satisfaction/dissatisfaction with teachers/school." These initial categories then became the basis for a second analysis of the interviews.

Accessing only those portions of the transcripts containing possible information on students' perceptions of caring teacher behaviors as identified above in the initial five categories, the researchers began the process of breaking down and conceptualizing speech segments. A speech segment was defined as a phrase, sentence, or group of sentences in which a student described some caring act or behavior of a teacher. Again, as in the first analysis, the researchers generated a large number of conceptual labels. Unlike the first analysis in which all responses were labeled and categorized, the second analysis examined only those student speech segments that included a specific reference to caring actions or behaviors of teachers. Responses that seemed to indicate a caring school or caring environment were not included in the labeling process since the focus of the analysis was on caring teacher behaviors. The labels were then analyzed, grouped, and constantly revised to fit emerging patterns and themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Fowler, 1988, and Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Findings

The analysis identified seven concept groups (Table 2). Each concept group is listed and discussed in order of decreasing frequency.

(Table 2)

The first concept group was **"encouraging."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively encouraged and pushed students to succeed. Teachers who were

identified as caring as a result of encouraging students were described by the students in the following ways: *supportive, motivates students, does not give up on students, inspires students, encourages, pushes, instills confidence, shows confidence in students' abilities, believes in the student, praises students, is persistent, assigns responsibility, allows mistakes.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "encouraging:"

> ***Pushing***
> "My writing workshop teacher--she really cares. She pushes us to do our best, and if you have a problem like a block for whatever assignment we have, we go to her and she helps us."
>
> ***Encourages***
> "The teachers care a lot--they constantly tell you that you can be a better student."
>
> ***Praises students***
> "Most teachers will call your parents if there is a problem. There's one teacher who calls parents to praise students--now that's really caring!"

The second concept group was **"relationship."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively fostered a deeply personal relationship with students. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their developing relationships with students were described by the students in the following ways: *mentoring, parent-like, easy to talk to, develops a relationship with students, helps students find themselves, gets to know students, personally involved, not racist, involved with parents, develops a personal relationship, emotionally involved, has a friend-like relationship, open communication.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "relationship:"

> ***Emotionally involved***
> "The school cares a lot...the teachers get sort of emotional about it. It's not college where if you fail, you fail. The teachers here try to help you if you are coming down

[in grades]...they try to get you to help yourself. They are strict on obeying school rules."

Parent-like
"I like the fact that they [specific teachers] don't care about what color you are and it's about education and they look upon you as their own child. They care what happens to you as if they birthed you themselves."

Personally involved
"The teachers here, I think, care more. And, they're more into you...They see you in the hall and they'll stop you and talk with you and ask you how are things going and what your college plans are."

The third concept group was **"challenging."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively provided a personally and intellectually challenging educational experience. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their challenging students were described by the students in the following ways: *academically challenging, hard work ethic, tough, thorough, hard, strict, uses punishment and corrective measures, disciplined, treats students like adults, calls students' bluff, serious, straight-talking, assigns much work.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "challenging:"

Academically challenging
"The English teacher is challenging--she cares about us. She teaches us things."

Strict
"I can say there is one of my old teachers who cared for me a lot, Dr. [Long], she was very strict--she cared for every student she taught."

Uses punishment and corrective measures
"I think they care a lot because...if you have below a 2.0 [GPA], you're banned from performing or field trips, things you need to do in the arts."

The fourth concept group was **"expectations."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively demonstrated high expectations for student behavior. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their expectations for the student were described by the students in the following ways: *makes students maintain excellence, pulls the best out of students, sets standards, has realistic expectations, has high expectations, makes students give 100%, does not settle for less than the best, believes in the students, puts academics first, puts education first, cares about education.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "expectations:"

> ***Has high expectations***
> "Some teachers don't care. But, a few [teachers] have high expectations--they care!"
>
> ***Does not settle for less than the best***
> "I think they [specific teachers] care an awful lot. Especially when they see that you are not living up to your potential. They really want you to do the best you can."
>
> ***Makes students give 100%***
> "If they [specific teachers] know that you can give more--they are going to pound you until you give that extra effort. I think that the teachers here discuss certain students and say, 'I know this student could do better.' All the teachers jump on you and pound you. They are going to make you give your all."

The fifth concept group was **"involvement."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively involved students in the educational experience. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their involving students were described by the students in the following ways: *gets students involved/innovative, assigns group work, has a high degree of interaction with students, creates a family-like atmosphere, creates unity, lets students think for themselves, helps students help themselves.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "involvement:"

Creates a family-like atmosphere
"There are a lot of [teachers] here who care for you--we are bound together--we're like a family, and through this learning process we learn better."

Gets students involved/innovative
"My Physics teacher, Mr. [Moss]--he's helped me...the way he teaches is innovative and he got us involved and made us want to learn more."

Helps students think for themselves/helps students help themselves
"I liked the teacher [she] let you work. You did your work on your strength and she did not baby you. She lets you really think for yourself and you get real involved with it."

The sixth concept group was **"concerned."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively demonstrated concern for the individual student. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their concern for the individual student were described by the students in the following ways: *interested in students' futures, pulls students aside for counsel, gives personal attention, recognizes students' feelings, listens, available, makes you feel wanted, provides choices, gives students credit, interested in personal matters, is perceptive, notices if you are having problems, gives unsolicited advice, checks up on you, concern for the individual student, warm, sympathetic, helpful with personal problems.* The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "concerned:"

Checks up on you:
"You can't just skip school or anything. If you're absent they [specific teachers] will call your house. And if you're not in class, they will find out what's wrong...you might not feel that that is caring about you but they are basically caring."

Helpful with personal problems:
"Dr. [Bentley], she really cares a lot because she's been there when I had problems with other teachers; she helped me know how to get around them. She tells you how to deal with them. Another teacher...took me aside to find out what my problems were."

Sympathetic

"Mrs. [Arnett] has been an excellent person around. She is sympathetic to students and a lot of our students' parents have died. We have tried to do the best we could to support that family. When you see Mrs.[Arnett] standing over everybody and see how she cares about the students, that kind of makes you feel good. It's good to say I can give my school this and that. It makes you feel good."

The seventh concept group was **"helping."** This category consisted of teacher behavior that actively provided extra help for students. Teachers who were identified as caring as a result of their providing extra help to students were described by the students in the following ways: *spends extra time explaining material, offers help to students, provides equal help to all students, able and willing to provide extra help, helps students individually, desires to help students*. The following is a sample of some of the actual student responses that were coded as "helping:"

Willing and Able to help

"The teachers...care a lot. If you are having a problem in a certain area, you can have a tutoring class...also you can go back to the teachers before school or after school, sometimes during lunch. They really go out of their way to help."

Provides equal help to all students

"I think the teachers really care about students, you know, students who don't even try. They say 'I'm going to stay after or help you on the side.' They really go out of their way to try to help you to pass."

Offers help to students

"They [specific teachers] do offer a lot of help...they are always there for you."

Other concepts expressed by individual students related more toward teacher characteristics (Table 3). These characteristics were distinct from the concepts in the seven concept groups but were not analyzed separately because they lacked an emphasis on teacher behavior.

The data were analyzed separately based on school type with several patterns emerging (Table 4). The concept groups of *expectations, encouraging,* and *challenging* were emphasized in the conversations of students from all three school types; implying that these behaviors are consistent in defining caring for students within the three school types. Students in Catholic schools tended to associate the concepts of *helping* and *involving* with caring teacher behavior more often in their conversations than those students from either single focus or multifocus schools. Additionally, the concept of *relationship* was found more often in the conversations of students from single focus and Catholic schools. While the concept of *concerned* was more often associated with caring teacher behavior by students in Catholic and multifocus schools.

Discussion of Findings

The concept groups identified in this study are consistent with the work of other researchers (Hayes, Ryan and Zseller, 1994; Rogers, 1991; Coburn, 1989; and Check, 1986). Hayes, Ryan and Zseller (1994) suggest that "students perceive caring as personal interaction more frequently than they perceive it as being offered to the class as a whole" (p. 20). In this study, the seven concept groups of *encouraging, relationship, challenging, expectations, involvement, concerned,* and *helping* all emphasize one-on-one interactions between teacher and student; verifying the work of Hayes, Ryan, and Zseller (1994) among others. The concept groups *of encouraging, relationship, involvement, concerned,* and *helping* are similar to the most frequently reported concepts identified by Hayes et al. (1994, p. 20) (*encouraged success and positive feelings, responded to the individual, counseled the student, and helped*

with academic work), Check (1986, p. 331) (*understanding of students and their problems, ability to relate to students, interested in them)* and Coburn (1989) (*complimented, respected, and listened to me*).

The present study, however, identified two additional concept groups not included in the major findings of the previous authors: *challenging and expectations*. These two concept groups, which were identified by students in all three school types, illustrate a significantly different view of caring than previous research has indicated. That is to say, some students--particularly African-American students--consider the behaviors of teachers who challenge them academically, who are tough and disciplined, as well as teachers who have high expectations of students and make them give 100%, as caring. These concepts reemphasize the need for personal interaction, but also lend credibility to behaviors that can be exhibited to the class as a whole. Personal interaction, however, is still perceived as caring behavior more frequently by all students.

In the current study, students from Catholic schools, as opposed to single focus or multifocus schools, used a greater variety of concepts to describe caring teacher behaviors. Perhaps students in Catholic schools are more accustomed to personal interactions and high individual expectations than their counterparts in either the singlefocus or multifocus schools. We can surmise, given the literature reviewed earlier, that students in Catholic schools may have more personal interaction with parents and teachers and therefore come to expect and find value in such interactions.

Conclusions and Implications

Teachers in both public and Catholic schools expressed high expectations for these African-American students, encouraged them to succeed, and provided them with challenging curriculum content. In Catholic schools, however, teachers went a step beyond the types of attitudes and behaviors teachers exhibited in public schools. Catholic school teachers appeared more willing to be personally involved with their students, develop relationships with them, express concern for them personally, and demonstrate their affection and concern through personal sacrifices of their own time by giving students the extra help they needed to succeed academically. In this study, Catholic school teachers' ethic of care might be described as both cognitive as well as affective; whereas public school teachers tended to limit their caring to a cognitive or professional level.

This study has implications for the preparation and continual growth and development of teachers that go beyond notions of professionalism circumscribed by formal relationships between teachers and students (Bidwell, 1965; Waller, 1938). Schools that exhibit a "sense of community" where teachers and students truly care for one another contribute to student academic engagement and achievement (Bryk & Holland, 1995). In addition, the helping professions, especially teaching, can benefit from continued research that will lead to a greater understanding and an improved formulation of the kind of caring that will help teachers and students relate to one another in a more positive way--the kind of caring that many public school teachers have been unable to provide for African-American students.

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Table 1

Demographics of Schools

School	Size	African American % (N)	White % (N)	Other % (N)	Number of cases	Gender M	Gender F	Families below poverty level
Catholic					37	17	20	
C1	706	99 (693)	--- ---	1 (7)	10	4	6	12%
C2	440	86 (378)	13 (57)	1 (5)	9	5	4	12%
C3	560	54 (302)	36 (202)	10 (56)	8	4	4	12%
C4	280	100 (280)	--- ---	--- ---	10	4	6	12%
Single-focus					31	15	16	
S1	374	100 (374)	--- ---	--- ---	15	7	8	10%
S2	440	98 (431)	2 (9)	--- ---	16	8	8	30%
Multi-focus					20	10	10	
M1	2100	73 (2100)	17 (357)	10 (210)	10	5	5	25%
M2	2200	81 (1782)	15 (330)	4 (88)	10	5	5	25%

Table 2

A Taxonomy of Caring Teacher Behavior

Types of caring behavior	Descriptors and behaviors
Encouraging	Actively encourages and pushes students to succeed *"supportive, motivates students, does not give up on students, inspires students, encourages, pushes, instills confidence, shows confidence in students' abilities, believes in the student, praises students, is persistent, assigns responsibility, allows mistakes"*
Relationship	Actively fosters a deeply personal relationship with students *"mentoring, parent-like, easy to talk to, develops a relationship with students, helps students find themselves, gets to know students, personally involved, not racist, involved with parents, develops a personal relationship, emotionally involved, has a friend-like relationship, open communication"*
Challenging	Actively provides a personally and educationally challenging environment *"academically challenging, hard work ethic, tough, thorough, hard, strict, uses punishment and corrective measures, disciplined, treats students like adults, calls students' bluff, serious, straight-talking, assigns much work"*
Expectations	Actively demonstrates high expectations for student achievement *"makes students maintain excellence, pulls the best out of students, sets standards, has realistic expectations, has high expectations, makes students give 100%, does not settle for less than the best, believes in the students, puts academics first, puts education first, cares about education"*
Involvement	Actively involves students in the educational experience *"gets students involved, assigns group work, has a high degree of interaction with students, innovative, creates a family-like atmosphere, creates unity, lets students think for themselves, helps students help themselves"*
Concerned	Actively demonstrates concern for the individual student *"interested in students' future, pulls students aside for counsel, gives personal attention, recognizes students' feelings, listens, available, makes you feel wanted, provides choices, gives students credit, interested in personal matters, is perceptive, notices if you are having problems, gives unsolicited advice, checks up on you, concern for the individual student, warm, sympathetic, helpful with personal problems"*
Helping	Actively provides extra help for students *"spends extra time explaining material, offers help to students, provides equal help to all students, able and willing to provide extra help, helps students individually, desires to help students"*

Note. Normal type = descriptors compiled from consolidation process. Italicized type = caring behaviors articulated in study data.

Table 3

A Taxonomy of Caring Teacher Characteristics

Types of caring characteristics
Does not get angry
Credible
Likable
Down to earth
Compassionate
Committed
Trustworthy
Fair
Dependable
Reliable
Kind
Hardworking
A person of high character
Effective

Table 4

Caring Teacher Behavior as Described by Students in Three School Types

Types of caring behavior	School Type		
	Single Focus	Multi Focus	Catholic
Encouraging	•	•	•
Relationship	•		•
Challenging	•	•	•
Expectations	•	•	•
Involvement			•
Concerned		•	•
Helping			•

Note. "•" indicates the presence of that particular concept group in the conversations of students (from a corresponding school type) to describe caring teachers.

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