



POLICY NOTES

News from the ETS Policy Information Center

Volume 12, Number 2

Research & Development

Spring 2004

Affirmative Student Development: Closing the Achievement Gap by Developing Human Capital

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What will it take to eliminate the continued educational underdevelopment of so many segments of our society — to close the academic achievement gap?

Better teachers? Improved pedagogical practices?

Certainly. But we must begin by first making sure our nation's children — particularly those who have a history of being economically disadvantaged and undereducated — have access to the basic human resource development capitals that support development of academic abilities: good health, intellectually stimulating life experiences, and a network of significant people who have the knowledge and experience to nurture, guide, and support them in their academic pursuits, to name a few.

Unfortunately, too many children in our society do not have access to such resources.

It was out of this realization that I developed the notion of “affirmative development,” which refers to the effort needed for developing intellectual competence and academic ability in a broad range of students who have historically been resource-deprived and, as a consequence, are underrepresented in the pool of academically high achieving students. This concept stresses the need for more equitable access to the variety of human resource capitals upon which education rests. And it is built on the assumption that academic abilities are not simply of inherited aptitudes but are developed through a broad range of deliberate pedagogical, social, and educational interventions.

THIS ISSUE — HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ETS AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATION SEMINAR

“Unacceptable and hazardous to the welfare of this country” is how ETS Senior Vice President for Research & Development Drew Gitomer characterized the achievement gap at the organization's October 3, 2003, seminar on *African American Education and Achievement: Progress Made, Challenges Ahead*. “The achievement gap is the most important educational issue to grapple with today,” agreed seminar host Michael T. Nettles, Senior Research Director of ETS's Center for Policy Evaluation and Research.

The day-long event, which drew more than 100 education and public affairs professionals, assessed the challenges facing African Americans in all levels of education, including access to high-quality prekindergarten, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education; the progress

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Inequality of Capital

Although we have made enormous strides toward tearing down the so-called “color line,” racial discrimination continues to be a major problem in our society and contributes to the continued educational underachievement of those who are discriminated against. But when we consider the number of individuals who are Black — or whose native language is not English — but who have nonetheless been able to achieve, it becomes clear that racism cannot bear the only blame for underachievement, underrepresentation, or underdevelopment.

To the contrary, I am increasingly persuaded that the causes of this phenomenon include the unequal distribution of power and the resources upon which education and human development are based, rather than racism per se. Quite simply, as W.E.B. DuBois predicted back in 1958, the line between the haves and have-nots has become the real Achilles’ heel of today’s society.

To understand the magnitude of this problem, it is necessary that we look more closely at what it is to have and to have not. In many of the available analyses, income distribution has been the variable of focus. For individuals, inequality in the distribution of—and inadequacy in access to— income comprise a critical factor. On a group level, however, the problem of inequality in the distribution of wealth may be even more critical. While income may provide limited access to available resources, it is *wealth* that provides access to power and control. It is also wealth that provides ready access to essential human resource development capital. Some of us are beginning to believe that it is impossible to achieve meaningful participation in an advanced technological society without the capital to invest in human resource development.

What is the nature of that capital? According to several prominent researchers,¹ it includes:

Cultural capital — the collected knowledge, techniques, and beliefs of a people

Financial capital — income and wealth; family, community, and societal economic resources available for human resource development and education

Health capital — physical developmental integrity, health, nutritional condition, etc.

Human capital — social competence, tacit knowledge, and other education-derived abilities as personal or family assets

Institutional capital — access to political, education, and socializing institutions

Pedagogical capital — supports for appropriate educational experiences in home, school, and community

Personal capital — dispositions, attitudes, aspirations, efficacy, and a sense of power

Polity capital — societal membership, social concern, public commitment, and participation in the political economy

Social capital — social networks and relationships, social norms, cultural styles, and values

However, the access to and participation in these forms of capital have implications for how our nation addresses affirmative action.

Affirmative Action

Rather than targeting ethnic or gender groups for affirmative action, I suggest targeting larger and more diverse groups: those that are low on wealth and wealth-derived capital resources. Education and employment opportunities could be regarded as instruments of human resource development rather than agencies for the credentialing and rewarding of the “ablest.” Rather than protecting the opportunity

¹ P. Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1986. J.S. Coleman, E.Q. Campbell, C.J. Hobson, J. McPartland, A.M. Mood, F.D. Weinfeld, & L.R. York, *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966. E.W. Gordon & A.S. Meroe, “Common Destinies — Continuing Dilemmas,” *Psychological Science*, 2(1), January 1989. L.S. Miller, *An American Imperative: Accelerating Minority Educational Advancement*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

to enter, let us ensure the opportunity to develop and qualify. In addition to a program of affirmative action, I propose a program of affirmative development.

An Affirmative Development Policy

A national effort at affirmative development to complement continuing efforts at affirmative action should be much broader than the initiatives directed at improving the effectiveness of education. Within the education establishment, however, we know a great deal about the deliberate development of academic ability. I propose that the education community embark upon a deliberate effort to develop academic abilities in a broad range of students who have a history of being resource deprived and who as a consequence are underrepresented in the pool of academically high achieving students. The deliberate or affirmative development of academic ability should include more equitable access to the variety of capitals referred to above and to such educational interventions as:

- Early, continuous, and progressive exposure to rigorous pre-academic and academic teaching and learning transactions. This should begin with high levels of language, literacy, and numeracy development
- Rich opportunities to learn through pedagogical practices traditionally thought to be of excellent quality
- Diagnostic, customized, and targeted assessment, instructional, and remedial interventions
- Academic acceleration and content enhancement
- The use of relational data systems to inform educational policy and practice decisions
- Explicit socialization of intellect to multiple cultural contexts

- Exposure to high-performance learning communities
- Explication of tacit knowledge, metacognition, and metacomponential strategies
- Capitalization of the distributed knowledge, technique, and understanding that reside among learners
- Special attention to the differential requirements of learning in different academic domains
- Encouragement of learner behaviors such as deployment of effort, task engagement, time on task, and resource utilization
- Special attention to the roles of attitude, disposition, confidence, and efficacy
- Access to a wide range of supplementary educational experiences
- The politicalization of academic learning in the lives of subaltern communities of learners²

Conclusion

Income and wealth have greatly reduced the significance of the color line in our society. While race continues to be important, it is now time to direct economic, political, and social planning at reducing the growing disparities between the haves and the have-nots. This will require the affirmative development of large numbers of persons who, because of the mal-distribution of human resource development capital, have undeveloped academic and other abilities the nation will need.

Such an effort would focus on developing the underclasses of our society, in which ethnic minorities are congregated but are by no means the majority. The pursuit of universal economic justice, together with racial justice, may be the most promising route to universally optimal human development.

² Subaltern peoples are groups of persons who have been subordinated by the dominant culture yet have simultaneously adopted aspects and developed alternative forms and strategies of resistance to the dominant culture. Some groups of African American males are sometimes referred to as subaltern groups.

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made in closing the achievement gap; and the challenges facing colleges and universities in their efforts to enroll, retain, and graduate these students.

Three of the presentations are highlighted in this issue of *ETS Policy Notes*.

- **Affirmative Student Development: Closing the Achievement Gap by Developing Human Capital**, Edmund W. Gordon, Richard March Hoe Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University and John M. Musser Professor of Psychology Emeritus, Yale University.
- **Closing the Gap at the Starting Gate: Why the Court Ordered Preschool Education**, Ellen Frede, Assistant to the Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood Programs, New Jersey State Department of Education.
- **African American Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Teachers of African American Students: The Unexamined Variable**, Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Urban Education, Emory University.

Another presentation has been published as a Policy Information Perspective titled *Affirmative Action and Diversity: The Beginning of the End? Or the End of the Beginning?* by Mark R. Killenbeck, Wylie H. Davis Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas (download free copies from www.ets.org/research/pic). Other participants in the seminar included Henry Braun and Catherine M. Millett, ETS; M. Christopher Brown, Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute; and Eugene Y. Lowe, Northwestern University.

This issue also announces the creation of the Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation & Research by the ETS Board of Trustees.

Closing the Gap at the Starting Gate: Why the Court Ordered Preschool Education

Ellen Frede

Assistant to the Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood Programs, New Jersey State Department of Education

The New Jersey Supreme Court's 1998 ruling in *Abbott v. Burke* (Abbott V) was the first judicial directive in the nation that required that public education must include a high-quality, well-planned preschool program starting at age 3. The Court's rationale for this mandate was based on the state constitution's requirement that each student receive a "thorough and efficient" education. Since many of the children in the Abbott districts start school with abilities well below their more affluent peers, the Court reasoned that a "thorough and efficient" education was not possible without preschool. This unprecedented decision applied to 30 urban school districts, known as the Abbott districts, which serve about 25 percent of the state's public school children.³

This article highlights some of the research findings on which the Court based its preschool mandate. This research shows that intensive, high quality preschool programs can close much of the early achievement gap for lower income children and that children who participate in these programs perform better in school, ultimately leading to more productive participation in the social and economic life of their communities as adults. While these studies constitute what might be considered the "gold standard" in terms of the quality of their evaluation designs, their results are bolstered by many quasi-experimental, short-term studies. The programs are:

- **The Title 1 Chicago Child-Parent Center Program** is a center-based early intervention that provides comprehensive educational and family support services to economically disadvantaged children from preschool to early elementary school. Established by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the overall goal of the program is to promote children's academic success and to facilitate parent involvement in children's education.

³ For information on the implementation of this mandate, see www.nj.gov/njded/ece.

- **Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention** was a carefully controlled intervention in which 111 children, from infancy through age 5, from low-income families, were randomly assigned to participate in a full-time, high quality program. Each child had an individualized prescription of educational activities consisting of “games” or activities that addressed social, emotional, and cognitive development, but gave particular emphasis to language.
- **The Perry Preschool Project** is perhaps the most well-known of all High/Scope research efforts, examining the lives of 123 African Americans born in poverty and at high risk of failing in school. From 1962 to 1967, at ages 3 and 4, the subjects were randomly divided into a program group who received a high quality preschool program based on High/Scope’s active learning approach and a comparison group who received no program. In the most recent phase of the study, 95 percent of the original participants were interviewed at age 27. Additional data were gathered from the subjects’ school, social services, and arrest records.

As shown Figure 1, the effects of these programs were impressive, although, clearly, preschool was not a panacea. Benefits accrued to the program participants in educational, social, and personal attainment. The children who participated in these programs were more likely than their peers who did not participate to graduate from high school and attend college, to be employed, to earn a substantial

salary, and to own their own home. They were less likely than their peers to require special education, to be arrested, or to be on welfare.

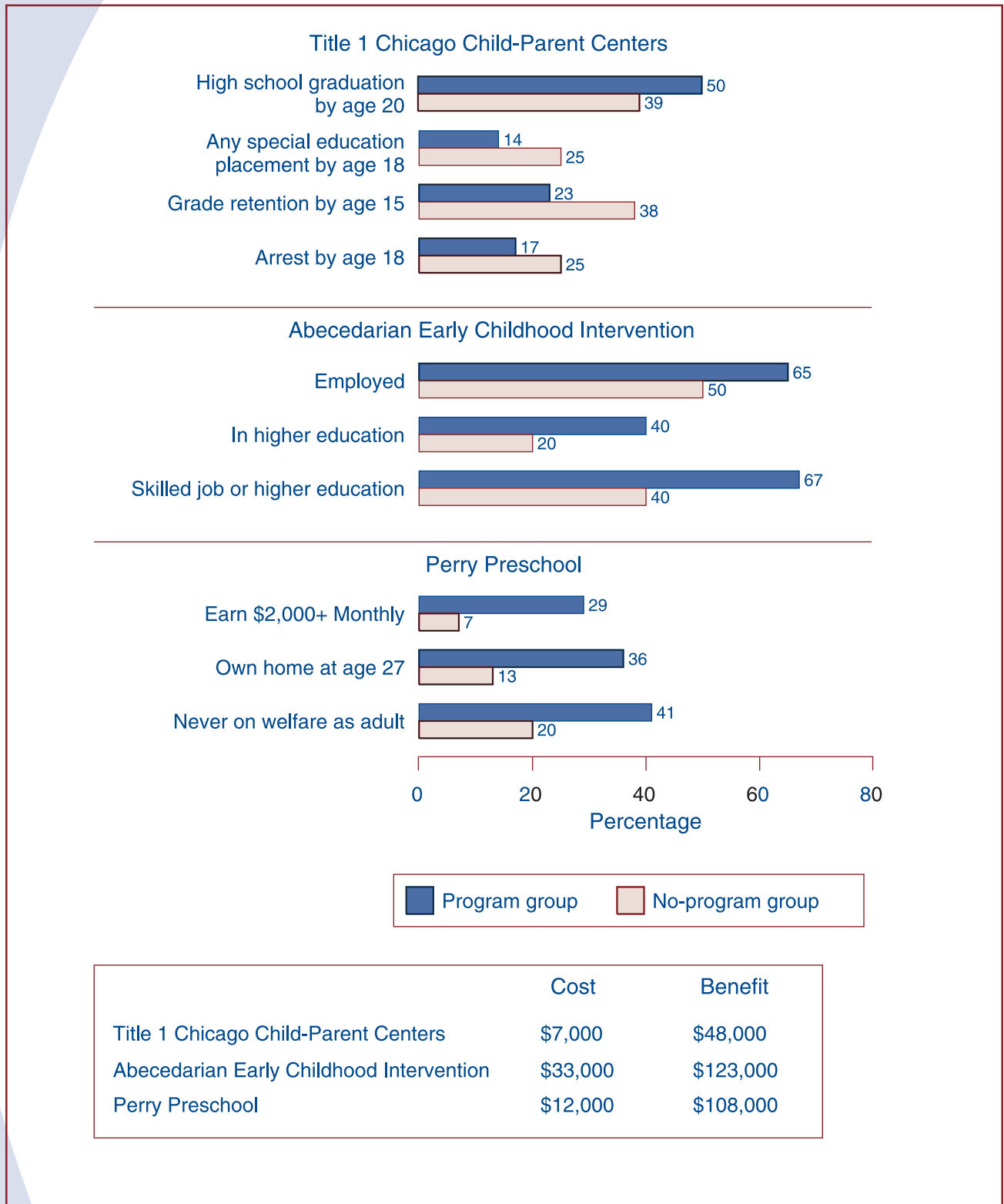
While these results are impressive, both in terms of their effect on the participants and on the communities in which they live, there were significant costs involved. These costs, along with their economic benefits, are shown in the bottom portion of the chart. It is clear that the benefits far exceeded the costs.

The New Jersey Court recognized the extraordinarily high quality of these programs and realized that the Abbott preschool programs would need to be of similar quality if they were to provide equivalent payoff. Thus, the Court required that the programs:

- Employ qualified teachers certified in preschool to grade 3 education
- Provide small classes with 15 or fewer children along with the teacher and an assistant
- Use a sound, intellectually challenging curriculum with an educational focus
- Provide strong leadership and supervision to help teachers

New Jersey has made significant progress toward fully implementing its preschool program. The building blocks are in place that will produce a significant payoff in terms of the Abbott children’s futures.

Figure 1: The Effects, Costs, and Benefits of Three Preschool Programs



Sources:

A.J. Reynolds et al., *Age 21 Cost Benefit Analysis of the Title1 Chicago Child-Parent Centers*, Discussion Paper #1245-02, Madison, WI: Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin, February 2002.

L.N. Masse & W.S. Barnett, "A Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention," in H. Levin & P. McEwan (Eds.), *Cost-Effectiveness and Educational Policy: 2002 Yearbook of the American Educational Finance Association*, Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, 2002.

W.S. Barnett, "Cost-Benefit Analysis," in L.J. Schweinhart, H.V. Barnes, & D.P. Weikart, with W.S. Barnett & A.S. Epstein, *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation No. 10, Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1993.

African American Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Teachers of African American Students: The Unexamined Variable

Jacqueline Jordan Irvine

Charles Howard Candler Professor of Urban Education, Emory University

Researchers have posited many explanations for why the African American achievement gap continues to persist. Most of these tend to focus on socioeconomic factors linked to African American students and their families, teacher quality indicators, or cultural incongruence variables — in this case, the mismatches between the norms, values, beliefs, and worldview of African American students and those of the culture of their schools.

While these traditional explanations certainly contribute to the understanding of the “Black-White achievement gap,” my research has led me to conclude that they don’t go far enough, because they fail to recognize and account for the critical role played by students’ significant others, who can offset the impact of negative influences that prohibit and constrain academic achievement. In particular, researchers have ignored the culturally specific classroom practices and pedagogical beliefs that successful African American teachers bring to their classrooms and how those practices and beliefs affect the learning of their African American students.

This article begins to address these omissions by describing documented elements of the culturally specific pedagogy of African American teachers. The information provided resulted from data collected during an extensive study of teachers enrolled in the Center for Urban Learning/Teaching and Urban Research in Education and Schools (CULTURES), a professional development center at Emory University that is dedicated to assisting practicing elementary and middle school teachers in developing effective classroom practices for working with culturally diverse students in urban schools.

African American Teachers' Perspectives

The typical CULTURES participant is an African American female teacher who works in an elementary school in the Atlanta Public School system, holds a master’s degree, and has 16 years of teaching experience. These African American teachers tended to focus on how their own ethnic identity, classroom practices, and personal and professional beliefs are related to the achievement of their African American students. They frequently verbalized strong beliefs about their ability to “make a difference” in the personal and school lives of their students, and they often spoke of how their own cultural notions of teaching guided them in their practice. These cultural notions were often different from what they had been taught in their teacher preparation programs. In fact, some said they had to “unlearn” and modify what they had learned in the academy in order to address the specific learning needs of their African American students.

The African American teachers in my research not only viewed teaching as telling, guiding, and facilitating mastery of mandated content standards, but they also defined their craft in terms of *caring*, *“other mothering,” believing, demanding the best, disciplining*, and as *a calling*. These beliefs and behaviors are related, I believe, to the success and achievement of the African American students they teach.

Teaching Is Caring

According to Vanessa Siddle Walker, African American teachers have a different view of caring than the views described in the research literature, and she charges that these conceptions have been excluded from published research. She specifically states that African American teachers

1. Focused on caring in all aspects of a child's life, rather than in narrow, interpersonal ways
2. Cared for students by providing honest and truthful feedback to students about their performance
3. Cared for their students but never relinquished their authority or attempted to be friends of their students
4. Demonstrated that their caring is representative of a history of African American, culturally specific teaching behaviors⁴

Teaching Is "Other Mothering"

The African American teachers in my work reported feeling a strong sense of personal attachment and kinship to their low-income African American students. Patricia Hill Collins calls these teachers the "other mothers" — teachers who emotionally adopt hundreds of students each year. Other mothering is different from researchers' descriptions of teacher identification and surrogate parenting. These "other mothers" are attached both to their individual students as well as to their ethnic group, and they are motivated not only by their desire to help their students but also to advance the cultural group.

Teaching Is Believing

Teachers who have confidence in their practice are persistent and resilient in the facing of seemingly insurmountable odds. The African American teachers in this research had confidence in their ability to teach, believed their students could learn, and acted on those beliefs by demanding that their African American students perform.

Teaching Is Demanding the Best

Teachers are significant others in the lives of their African American students, and research shows that their expectations about their students seem to be related to their students' achievement.⁵ As one of the CULTURES participants asserted, "If you expect nothing, you get nothing!" Another told me, "I expect an awful lot, but I refuse to settle for less."

Teaching Is Disciplining

The African American teachers in this study also tended to be strong yet compassionate disciplinarians who were admired, not resented, by their pupils. Vasquez called these no-nonsense teachers "warm demanders," committed, respectful, dedicated, and competent educators who are not afraid, resentful, or hostile toward their pupils.⁶ The approaches used by African American warm demanders contrast with researchers' prescriptions that teachers act as facilitators and joint constructors of knowledge.

Teaching Is a Calling

Historically, teachers in the African American community have been held in high esteem and saw teaching as a moral act reminiscent of the "lifting as we climb" philosophy of the Black women educators of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as Lucy Laney, Charlotte Hawkins Brown,

⁴ V.S. Walker, "Caring in a Past Time: Southern Segregated Schooling for African American Children," in V.S. Walker & J. Snarey (Eds.), *Racing Moral Formation*, New York: Teachers College Press, in press.

⁵ S.T. Johnson & S. Prom-Jackson, "The Memorable Teacher: Implications for Teacher Selection," *Journal of Negro Education*, 55, 272-283, 1986.

⁶ J.A. Vasquez, "Contexts of Learning for Minority Students," *Educational Forum*, 56, 6-11, 1988.

Fanny Jackson Coppin, and Ana J. Cooper.⁷ In my research, I have found that today's African American teachers continue to have this strong sense of spirituality. The African American teachers in this study tended to use phrases like "special Godly anointing" and "sacred calling," "blessing," and "mission" to describe their work. And they often saw themselves as spiritual mentors and advisors for their African American students, to the point that their teaching has sometimes become preaching, when they felt it necessary to bolster their students with sermonettes about hard work, achievement, hope, appropriate behavior, and respect. For example, one teacher told me she does not *just* teach her subject matter. She said, "I teach life." When asked to name her greatest asset, her response was "My faith."

Conclusion

African American teachers bring to their work their values, opinions, and beliefs; their prior socialization and present experiences; and their gender, ethnicity, and social class. These cultural attributes shape the ways in which these teachers view their profession and practice their craft.

Although it would be unfair to imply that teachers are *solely* products of their cultural experiences, it would be equally naïve to assume that teaching is unaffected by cultural and ethnic variables. Yet, African American teachers' culturally specific views of teaching and pedagogical practices have not been included in most discussions of the Black-White achievement gap.

This must change — or there will always be an achievement gap between Black and White students. Researchers must begin to accept African American teachers' explanations of the Black-White

achievement gap as equal and legitimate accounts. I also recommend that they begin to develop a more complex, multivariable, interdisciplinary rubric for examining the nuances of the teaching context, as suggested by Brofenbrenner, whose model for research includes microsystem, mesosystem (relationships), exosystem (formal and informal social structures), and macrosystem (economic, legal, political) variables.⁸ These are critical and compelling variables that must be incorporated in future research.

Additionally, I call upon colleges of education at historically Black colleges and universities to focus their resources and energy on further developing the cultural conceptions of pedagogy described in this paper and to train culturally responsive teachers.

The need is urgent. Demographic data confirm that by the year 2020 about 40 percent of the nation's school-age population will be students of color, and students of color already represent 60 percent of the student population of our country's 20 largest school districts. Ironically, as the number of African American students is increasing in urban schools, the number of African American teachers is dramatically decreasing. The American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education reports that 80 percent of preservice teachers are White females who are unfamiliar with the cultural experiences of their diverse students. In order to address the problem of an increasingly diverse student population being taught by a decreasingly diverse teacher constituency, researchers and policymakers are advocating that teacher education programs train teachers to be culturally responsive — like the African American teachers described in this article.

⁷ J.J. Irvine & L. B. Hill, "From Plantation to School House: The Rise and Decline of Black Women Teachers," *Humanity and Society*, 14(3), 244-256, 1990.

⁸ U. Brofenbrenner, "The Experimental Ecology of Education," *Educational Researcher*, 5, 5-15, 1976.

ETS Creates Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation & Research

Nettles First Recipient of Post Created to Honor Noted Scholar

The ETS Board of Trustees approved the creation of the Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation & Research during its February meeting, and ETS President and CEO Kurt Landgraf has appointed Michael T. Nettles, Senior Research Director of ETS's Policy Evaluation & Research Center, to the post.

The effort honors Gordon, one of America's most prolific and thoughtful scholars. "Dr. Gordon is one of the conceptual leaders of several major developments in education, including Head Start, compensatory education, career education, school desegregation, alternatives in educational assessment, and supplementary education," Landgraf said. "He has had a long association with ETS as constructive critic and equally constructive supporter. From 1973 to 1979 he had an office at ETS and consulted on a number of projects. He continues to provide advice and guidance to research and program staff."

"Dr. Gordon has been a tireless champion for equity and social justice in education during his distinguished career as a minister, psychologist, author, educator, and research scholar," notes Eleanor Horne, ETS Vice President and Corporate Secretary. "His seminal work on issues of affirmative development and minority student achievement is world renowned and has changed the face of education in the United States. A January 2003 article in *The New York Times* said Dr. Gordon 'could reasonably be called one of the leading psychologists of our era and the premier Black psychologists.'"

Nettles' appointment came upon the recommendation of Drew Gitomer, Senior Vice President of ETS Research & Development. "We couldn't have chosen a better person to be appointed to the Edmund W. Gordon Chair than Mike Nettles," Landgraf said in announcing the appointment. "Mike has a nationwide reputation as a policy researcher on assessment, student performance, educational equity, and higher education finance policy. His dedication to the measurement profession is outstanding."

"I feel great appreciation and pride in accepting the honor of having a chair established at ETS to memorialize my career as an educator," Gordon said. "It is a unique privilege to have my name etched alongside those of my late friends Henry Chauncey, Samuel Messick, and the renowned Frederic Lord. And it's a personal pleasure to see my colleague and friend, Michael Nettles, named as the first occupant of the Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation & Research. My cup is running over."

Only a handful of positions at ETS have been named for individuals who have had a lasting and profound impact on the organization. Positions have been named for Chauncey, who was ETS's first president, and Messick and Lord, who were both noted psychometricians. "As ETS moves forward in our goal of advancing quality and equity in education, we can think of no greater scholar to honor and emulate than Edmund W. Gordon," reads the trustees' resolution. "A Chair in his name will give added stature to our Policy Evaluation & Research Center and to the person chosen to fill that position. Furthermore, it will signal ETS's commitment to the values of equity and social justice in education that Dr. Gordon has long espoused."

Gordon is the Richard March Hoe Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Education and director of the Institute of Urban and Minority Education (IUME) at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he was vice president of Academic Affairs and interim dean from July 2000 until August 2001. He is also the John M. Musser Professor of Psychology Emeritus at Yale University.

“This is thus far the highlight of my career,” Nettles said in accepting the chair. “It is the highest honor to be selected to serve in the chair named for the distinguished scholar, intellect, and gentleman Edmund W. Gordon. I am first of all deeply grateful to Kurt Landgraf, Drew Gitomer, the ETS Board of Trustees and my colleagues at ETS for the tribute to Ed Gordon’s life of outstanding contributions to education policy research and for being a person whom we deeply respect.

“I am equally grateful to them bestowing upon me the privilege to conduct my work in this distinguished chair. In accepting this appointment, I feel a sense of responsibility for making every effort to carry out the highest level of research, scholarship, and creativity that has earned Dr. Gordon this distinction,” Nettles adds. “Ed Gordon has been an inspiration to me as he has to so many people, and by accepting this chair I will always feel his influence as I write and speak. I suppose that I will often wonder even more than in the past what Ed might say in his marvelous style of passion and diplomacy about whatever topic I’m addressing. He will be there giving me, if not a second opinion, a second reflection upon everything I do from here on.”

“We chose Mike because his work embodies Dr. Gordon’s outstanding research in the service of educational policy and reform,” Gitomer said. “Like Dr. Gordon’s, Mike’s research asks critical questions, challenges existing assumptions, provides illuminating research, and offers solutions that fundamentally change the educational landscape to improve educational opportunity for all our citizens.”

A native of Nashville, Nettles received his bachelor’s degree in political science at the University of Tennessee and master’s degrees in political science and in higher education and a doctorate in higher education from Iowa State University.

Prior to returning to ETS in July of 2003, Nettles had been a professor of education at the University of Michigan since 1992. From 1996 to 1999, he served as the first executive director of the Fredrick D. Patterson Research Institute of the United Negro College Fund. In that role he published the three-volume African American Education Data Book series and *Two Decades of Progress*—the most comprehensive books of facts about the educational status and condition of African Americans in the United States ever produced.

Last year, Nettles completed his tenure of two terms on the National Assessment Governing Board, which oversees the U.S. Department of Education’s National Assessment of Educational Progress, where he has served as a vice chair. He also was a member of the College Board’s Board of Trustees, where he chaired the College Board Research and Development Committee. And he served as vice president for assessment for the University of Tennessee System, Knoxville, and as assistant director for academic affairs at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in Nashville.

Recently available from the ETS Policy Information Center . . .

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- *A Human Capital Concern: The Literacy Proficiency of U.S. Immigrants*, Policy Information Report, March 2004
- *Affirmative Action and Diversity: The Beginning of the End? Or the End of the Beginning?*, Policy Information Perspective, March 2004
- "The Chronic Underrepresentation of African Americans in Medicine," *ETS Policy Notes*, Volume 12, Number 1, Winter 2004
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ETS Policy Notes is published by the
ETS Policy Information Center
Educational Testing Service
Rosedale Road, 19-R
Princeton, NJ 08541-0001
(609) 734-5694

e-mail: pic@ets.org

www.ets.org/research/pic

Director: Richard J. Coley

Editors: Richard J. Coley, Amanda
McBride, Kim Fryer, and Bill
Monaghan

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