

8. The *Commissioner of Education*, supported by the *State Legislature*, should take the leadership to insure equity in access to coaching for nationally standardized tests. This means that funds must be provided and educators must be informed about the benefits of coaching.

9. The *Commissioner of Education* should encourage *local school districts*, through a series of financial incentives and/or recognition awards, to provide evidence of academic progress among black males on an annual basis as measured by improved curriculum, increased retention, special support systems, records of coaching and academic equity, and improved scores in the variety of standardized tests required by the state and local school district.

10. To reverse devastating trends in academic performance, *schools* should be rewarded for setting and achieving definite academic goals with reference to black males. Examples of such goals might include, but should not be restricted to the following: an increased number of black males who can compete successfully in the college preparatory track; the establishment of special developmental skills clinics, workshops or services related to the college preparatory sequence; the increase in the number of graduates with the requisite GPA's and test scores for full admission to a university in the State University System; and other approved motivated methods. The types, amounts, and/or quality of the incentives would be determined by the *Commissioner of Education*. To assure that all students will have access to the same quality of educational experiences, the *State Department of Education* should make certain that the curriculum in predominantly black schools does in fact meet the same standards as the curriculum in predominantly white schools. This, of course, will require that facilities, equipment, supplies, and instructional materials be equal to those enjoyed by majority schools.

Currently black males lose approximately \$6 billion annually in wages because they are employed in lower paying occupational groups than their white counterparts in the labor force. The magnitude of this loss would increase substantially if one added the loss of earnings resulting from the clustering of black males in the lowest paying jobs in specific occupational categories. Moreover, not only do jobs generally reserved for black males pay substandard wages, but they have the following characteristics: menial and unpleasant work assignments, very low status, little opportunity for real assignments, and little or no job security. Therefore, upgrading the jobs (work opportunities) available to black males and extending employment opportunities for them at all levels in all occupational categories is probably more important than the present preoccupation with black male unemployment.

Current data reveal that black male students are performing at a poorer rate than white males, white females, and black females in practically all school districts. Poor academic performance negatively impacts upon attendance and school behavior, increases the dropout rate, leads to questionable and disproportionate assignments in non-academic specialized programs, and contributes to the increasing decline of graduates from high school through the graduate levels.

In its quest for quality education in the public schools, the State of Florida has adopted a basic curriculum for all schools; but black males have not been recognized as a specific population-at-risk.

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that coaching works to raise scores dramatically (see, for example, Federal Trade Commission 1979, 1981; Messick, 1981; and DerSimonian and Laird, 1983). Yet, public schools generally do not provide extensive coaching, if they provide any at all. White students, because of higher income, have greater access to and are greater users of commercial coaching. But black students, because of lower income, have the least access to this coaching, even though blacks who take nationally standardized tests make significantly greater than average gains if coached — from two to three times the gains of white students.