

Recommendations Related to Experience

There are also four recommendations related to experience:

11. The *State Board of Education* and the *Commissioner* should take the leadership to guarantee curriculum equity in the schools by conducting a systematic and comprehensive review and revision of the curriculum and curriculum materials as is appropriate. The goal of such an effort should be to insure that racism or defamation of black images does not exist and that opportunities for the natural inclusion of positive images are not lost. For example, the Portland Public Schools have mounted such an effort in five K-12 curriculum areas. Their math and science curriculum document (scope and sequence) is exemplary.
12. The *State Department of Education* should make certain that predominantly minority schools are not assigned a disproportionate number of teachers with the least credentials, experience, and assessed competence.
13. The *State* should make grants available to minority students to avert the decline in black male enrollment at the college level. The State should provide financial support to fill the void in the education of black males created by the elimination or reduction of federally funded programs.
14. The *State Commissioner of Education* should commission a study of black male administrators in the state which includes an identification of the progression or upward mobility path for black males who show leadership potential.

These recommendations also take on meaning when we recognize that the present curriculum is not free of racial bias. Highly significant black participation is usually omitted, sometimes resulting in false pictures of the real world. Many residuals of inequity in curriculum content are present in teaching materials, films, and textbooks.

Teacher preparation, competence, and experience have significant impact on the quality of instruction and, ultimately, the quality of education schools provide. Thus, the State Department and local school districts have the responsibility to insure equality in the assignment of teachers.

Certain federally funded programs, which over the last several decades contributed significantly to the education and upward mobility of minorities (including the black male), have been substantially reduced or eliminated. Should the state fail to respond to the need for programs such as these, the result will be to close out of the educational pipeline many upward mobility opportunities for a large number of black males. Further, many of those who are excluded will be destined to become wards of society as welfare recipients or, possibly, prison inmates. Of the 26,000 inmates in Florida's correctional institutions in 1984, over 46 percent were black males. Yet black males constitute only 6.5% of Florida's population at large.

Black families have been severely penalized by the reduction in funds which support the Aid to Dependent Families (ADFC) Program. Between 1981 and 1982, approximately 660,000 families, a large number of which were black, had their ADFC benefits reduced or totally eliminated. In many cases, this also meant losing Medicaid coverage and reduced benefits for women pregnant for the first time. In addition, working ADFC recipients lost assurance of quality child care. The significance of this lies in the fact that the mortality rate among black males is already the highest among white and black males and females. Hence, if financial support is not provided to assure minimum health care, the mortality and mental deficiency statistics for black males will continue to be conspicuous.

There is clear evidence that the elimination of Social Security educational benefits and the reduction of federal student financial-aid has adversely affected black college attendance. This is especially significant as it pertains to black males, because traditionally, when the lack of funds forces black families to make a choice between sending a son or daughter to college, the daughter has been favored.

Too few black males with leadership potential are given the opportunity to receive the type of professional development which would qualify them for administrative positions. The assignment of black males with leadership potential to positions of low visibility contributes to a sense of their absence, militating against accessibility to them as role models. Positions such as "assistant" and "assistant to" are routes often leading to nowhere.