

EMPOWERING



MALES OF COLOR

YEAR 1 of a community-wide investment in our students

Nearly half (45%) of students in DC Public Schools are males of color. Despite improvements district-wide, there are still considerable achievement gaps between young men of color and their peers. We must work harder to ensure that all students—particularly boys and young men of color—share equally in DCPS' progress.

Empowering Males of Color (EMOC) is a comprehensive effort to change that narrative, improve the student experience, and help our young men develop the academic and social skills that lead to success. Led by DCPS, the initiative engages the entire city in an effort to prepare our boys and young men of color for college, careers and life.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Highlights of EMOC's First Year

Culturally responsive professional development and family engagement.

Working with Bank Street College of Education and the national Office of Head Start, DCPS developed a culturally responsive professional development program for classroom teachers and paraprofessionals of 3- and 4-year-olds. The program's goals include improving the quality of the school experience for boys of color, building stronger relationships between early childhood staff and the boys' families, and supporting the boys' relationships with their families.

More than 30 educators who teach 225 boys participated in the training. Principal and pre-K teacher teams reported increased consciousness and intentionality toward creating

more positive interaction with African American boys and families. They also reported increased motivation to be advocates for change within their schools, homes and communities.

500 for 500: Mentoring through Literacy.

This program aims to recruit, train and connect 500 mentors with K-12 students by June 2017. DCPS has met its year-one recruitment goal of 250 mentors and will connect more

students with caring and invested adults in the coming year.

In the 500 for 500 program, the academic focus is literacy, but the mentors build relationships to support their students both academically and personally. Schools are incorporating mentoring in both existing programs and new efforts. For example, in 2015-16 DCPS introduced a mentoring partnership with DC's Metropolitan



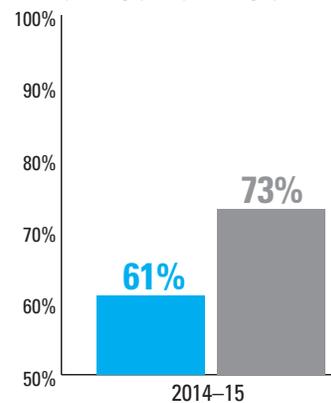
GROUNDING IN DATA

EMOC was developed in response to data that shows unacceptable gaps for male students of color. DCPS is investing in EMOC to close these gaps and will track DCPS indicators including the ones shown here.



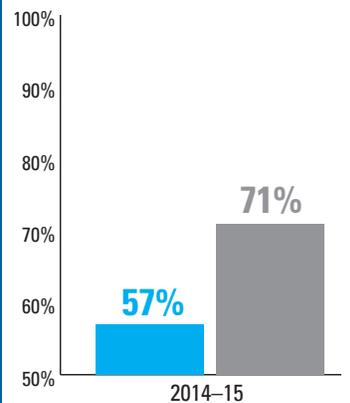
REACHED LITERACY SKILLS BENCHMARK (DIBELS)

Literacy skills gap: 12 percentage points



GRADUATION RATES

Graduation gap: 14 percentage points



MALES OF COLOR ALL OTHER STUDENTS

Police Department (MPD). MPD cadets are literacy mentors for 19 students at three schools.

DCPS also has partnered with some of the strongest literacy and mentoring organizations in the city, including Reading Partners; For Love of Children; Higher Achievement; Life Pieces to Masterpieces; Mentors, Inc.; and Reach, Inc.

New empowering males high school.

DCPS will soon open the city’s first public, all-male college-preparatory high school. The new school will be located at the site of the former Ron Brown Middle School, which is currently being modernized to accommodate the needs of a full high school program.

Dr. Benjamin Williams has been selected to serve as the school’s founding principal, and he is hard at work recruiting the staff and the inaugural freshman class. The first class of 150 9th grade students will start in August 2016. The school will emphasize college and career programming with a goal of a 100 percent graduation rate from both high school and college.

EMOC Innovation Grants. A competitive grant opportunity for DC Public Schools, Innovation Grants enable individual schools to address the

unmet needs of their male students of color. The grants are helping schools provide additional academic support, expand social/emotional support and improve family engagement. Many schools are partnering with organizations in their community to strengthen their EMOC programs. Administered by the DC Public Education Fund, Innovation Grants provide the most relevant resources to schools, fostering positive academic progress so all DCPS students can achieve at their highest potential.

Schools are using their grants for a variety of innovative efforts. For example, Eastern High School is providing travel for domestic and international service learning that engages students on issues of culture and identity; Noyes Elementary School and McKinley Technology High School are collaborating to provide STEM enrichment through robotics and peer math tutoring; and a consortium of DCPS elementary schools is using arts therapy to address trauma, loss and emotional stress.

Bringing more men of color to the classroom. Ample research shows the value of having students of all backgrounds see more teachers of color in classrooms, and it is

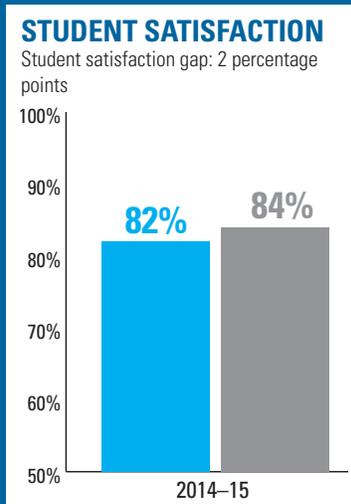
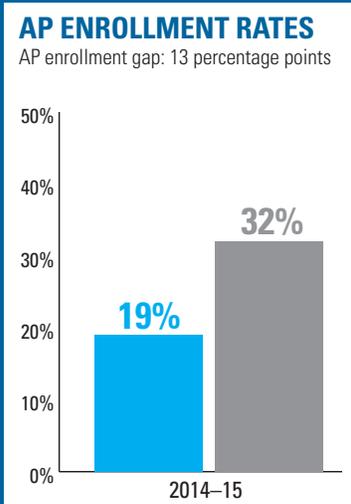
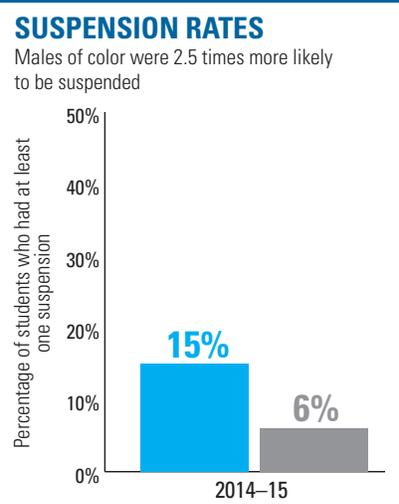


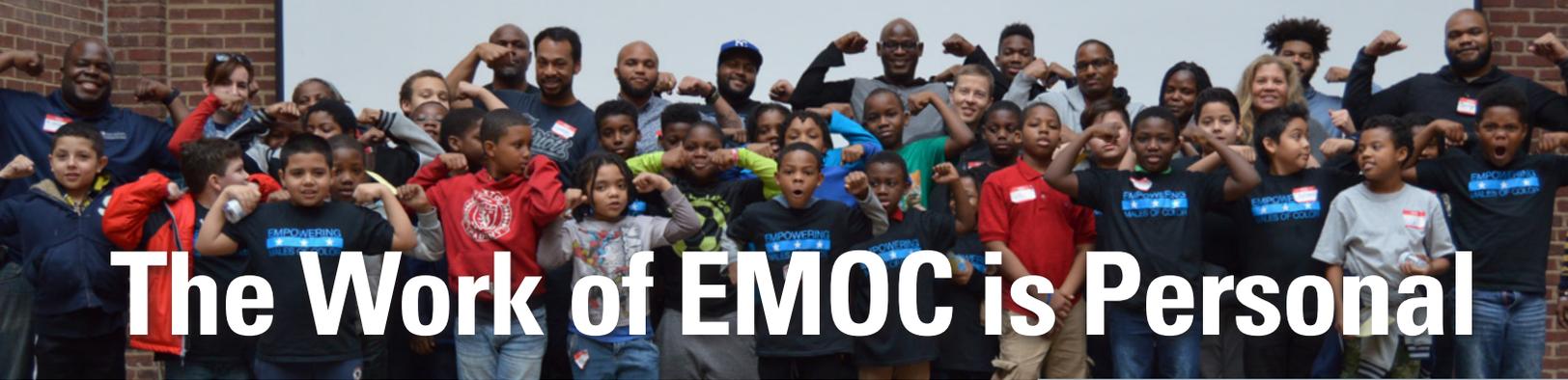
“We must be relentless in our pursuit of equity for our African American and Latino young men.”

— DCPS Chancellor Kaya Henderson, January 21, 2015

especially important for male students of color to see men of color in such positions in their own schools. DCPS is a national leader in this area: Nationwide, fewer than 5 percent of teachers are men of color. In DCPS, that figure is 15 percent.

DCPS is amplifying its recruitment efforts to ensure that boys and young men of color see teachers and role models who look like them. In fact, DCPS’ public commitment to EMOC, combined with ongoing recruitment outreach, has led to increases in the number of men of color applying for teaching positions. In 2015, 355 men of color applied for teaching positions in DCPS, compared to 297 the prior year, a 19 percent increase.





The Work of EMOC is Personal

At its core, everything about EMOC—from its mission and strategy to its interaction with students and schools—is deeply personal. This personal investment is most apparent in the connections between students and their mentors.

On many Saturdays, these connections are evident at **Saturday Strong Academy**, which is part of the 500 for 500: Mentoring through Literacy program. Saturday Strong brings together four groups: boys in grades 2–5 from two DCPS elementary schools, young men who are Eastern High School seniors, community members and Howard University students who volunteer as mentors, and DCPS staff who serve as lead mentors. The young boys see role models of all ages, the young men get to serve as mentors while getting support from the adults, and they all build essential skills for success in school and life. The participating schools are Browne Education Campus, H.D. Cooke Elementary School and Eastern Senior High School.

“Our boys are mentored by students from Howard University and Eastern High School students who, in their eyes, are just about the coolest kids ever. They talk about anything from college readiness to Martin Luther King to how they’re going to help their community. And then, they just play.”

— Katie Larkin, Principal, H.D. Cooke Elementary School

“Mentoring students has been a really great experience. We are going over how school is important, and talking about their careers and futures. We’re helping to put confidence in them to do better—to be a better person, to be a better leader and to help others as well.”

— Rico McCard, 12th Grader, Eastern Senior High School



It Takes a City

EMOC is a community-wide effort and an ongoing commitment. We are grateful to those who are already involved and hope others will join in. Three engines of our success are:

CIVIC COLLABORATION The District collaborated with legislators who passed a law banning suspensions for pre-K and kindergarten students. The District also introduced two new student discipline efforts: the School Climate Initiative, which helps educators build a positive learning environment; and Restorative Practices, a positive approach to addressing behavioral issues. These programs helped reduce suspensions and expulsions and, as a result, increase effective instructional time.

PHILANTHROPY DC Public Education Fund leads the fundraising efforts for the EMOC initiative and has generated an investment of more than \$3 million since January 2015. Local and national supporters include the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation; CityBridge Foundation; United Way of the National Capital Area; and the Committee of 100, a group of DC business and civic leaders.

YOU Please join us in the movement to empower our boys and young men of color. Sign up to be a mentor here: <http://bit.ly/EMOCVolunteers>. It takes a city!

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