Recruiting African American Male Teacher Candidates Using an Athletic Model

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Recruiting African American Male Teacher Candidates Using an Athletic Model: New Directions for Diversifying the Teacher Workforce

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Abstract

Alarmingly, African American male teachers constitute only 1% of the K-12 teaching force and approximately 2% of those enrolled in the 1,300 teacher preparation programs across the United States. In this article, the researchers provide a new framework to recruit African American males into teacher education programs in a similar fashion as they are recruited to play major collegiate sports. The framework presented challenges teacher education programs to become more active in recruiting African American males into the teaching profession.
Recruiting African American Male Teacher Candidates Using an Athletic Model: New Directions for Diversifying the Teacher Workforce

Why are African American male teachers not greatly represented in America’s K-12 classrooms? Why is it that many teacher education programs have not been successful and more aggressive in recruiting African American males into teacher preparation programs? How have major colleges/universities been very successful in recruiting African American males to play sports (e.g., football and basketball) but the field of education can not recruit African American males into teacher preparation programs? Finally, why is it that school districts across the country desperately need African American male teachers report they are unsuccessful in finding African American male teacher applicants? The questions posed above are some of the top dilemmas facing the field of education, especially in the area of teacher diversity. The critical shortage of minority male teachers, particularly African American male teachers is a dilemma that the education profession has struggled to solve but will need to solve quickly if minority students are to be successful in U.S. schools.

The call for African American males in teaching is due to the fact that in basically every geographic region of the country; in urban, suburban and rural districts; and in public and private schools; Schools, Colleges and Departments of Education (SCDE’s), African American male teachers or African American male teacher candidates are basically non-existent (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), 1999). Consequently, when we examine the make-up of university athletic departments in these same regions, the literature reports that African American males are the largest percentage of athletes on campus in the high-profile “revenue-producing”
sports of football and basketball (Lapchick, 2005). Further, the search for African American male teachers is joined with the justification that African Americans and other students of color need role models in order to raise their academic achievement levels in the K-12 classroom. Limited research suggests that teacher diversity is of great benefit to all students, particularly minority students (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS) (2003), “it is important for students of color to have role models they can look up to, role models who look like them, who have come from similar backgrounds and who are important and influential in their lives” (p.4). As a result, a beautiful excerpt from the extant literature highlights the critical importance that teachers of color, particularly African American males bring to the K-12 classroom. Rumbach and Gebeloff (2000) noted:

“Teachers tend to be the one person and authority figure outside of the home that have a lot of influence on children. When they [students] only see white people as teachers, that can reinforce the negative stereotype in white students and students of color—that people of color are not capable of holding positions of authority. To students of color, it is even more damaging because it sends a message that they shouldn’t even bother (p. 4).

In a sense, the critical shortage of African American male teachers begins at the earliest levels of education (Jackson & Moore, 2006; Lewis, 2006). Many of the nation’s minority and/or low-income students are the most at-risk of low educational attainment and are less likely than majority students to attend and complete four or more years of
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college (Flowers, 2006; Moore, 2006). This clog in the pipeline, which limits the pool of college-bound students who might become teachers, must be remedied to increase the racial and ethic representation in all professions, particularly the teaching profession.

As a result of this disturbing trend, this paper will explore the recruitment and impact of African American male teachers in America’s K-12 classrooms. Specifically, we explore the following questions: 1) why do schools need African American male teachers?; 2) what is the potential impact of African American male teachers on the academic achievement of urban and minority students? Finally, the researchers provide a framework for recruiting African American male teacher candidates in a similar fashion as many African American males are recruited to play sports at the collegiate level.

Why Do Schools Need African American Male Teachers?

There is an emerging literature base that continues to document that African American male teachers are needed more than any other time in U.S. history (Lewis, 2006; Lynn, 2006; Williams, 2001). Unfortunately, Gursky, Rose and Moss (2004) reported that today’s student could easily go their entire academic career in the K-12 educational system without ever seeing an African American male teacher. Current research literature has documented that the representation of African American male teachers is not at all close to the representation of African American students in public schools across the United States (Foster & Peele, 1999; Irvine, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002). The School and Staffing Survey (2006), administered by the National Center for Education Statistics reported that White teachers currently comprise approximately 84% of the public school teaching population. In 2005, African American students comprised 17% of the public school total enrollment, while African American male teachers
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comprise only 1% of the teaching population (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). Reversing the trend of low African American male teacher representation will continue to be a major task for the field of education.

Across the nation, many school districts and teacher education programs have expressed the need for minority teachers, particularly African American males in the teaching population (Banks, 1991, 1994; Case, Shive, Ingebretson, & Spiege, 1988; Greer & Husk, 1989; Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004). Mack and Jackson (1996) reported that when minority and majority students do not have adequate exposure to minority teachers in their K-12 educational careers, these students often assume that only white Americans have the ability to obtain influential positions in the field of education. Smith, Mack, and Akyea (2004) noted that “as the proportion of white American teachers grows, role modeling that might encourage minority students to pursue careers in education decreases, possibly further decreasing the already inadequate ratio of minority teachers to minority pupils in the schools” (p. 76). While the student population in U.S. schools continues to become more diverse, the teaching population is not keeping pace.

The lack of African American male teachers in the K-12 educational setting has been so dramatic that researchers have referred to this population as an “endangered species” (Irving, 1988; Michigan Education Association, 1992). Further, Parks (1998) pointed out, “in America’s classrooms, the African American male as a teacher is a figure sadly missing” (p. 1). Given this trend, Smith, Mack and Akyea (2004) report that the consequence is that a great majority of teachers instructing an ethically diverse student population is white and into the foreseeable future they will continue to be this way.
According to Recruiting New Teachers (2000), in many school districts across the country where minority students are the majority, over 65% of teachers are white. According to this report, African American teachers (male and female) make up only 21 percent of the teaching force in these urban school districts. By contrast, in school districts in which 90 percent or more of the students are white, white teachers make up 99 percent of the teaching population (Recruiting New Teachers, 2000). As a result, we learn from the literature that no matter the demographic make-up of the student population, white teachers are the majority of the teaching population. These data have ramifications on the potential for future African American males who may possibly want to enter the teaching profession.

Why Recruit African American Male Teachers?

The growing literature base on the recruitment and retention of African American male teachers has documented that it is imperative for teacher education programs and school districts to place this initiative as a priority (Lewis, 2006). Across the United States, school districts have placed a strong emphasis on recruiting and retaining African American males in the teaching profession (Williams, 2001). Most notable is the “Call Me Mister” collaborative projects between Clemson University, Benedict College, Claflin College, Morris College and Voorhees College that actively recruit, train, certify, and place African American male teachers in public school classrooms (Parks, 1998). These South Carolina institutions’ emphasis on recruiting African American males in the teaching profession reflected the need for attracting ethnic minorities to the field of education, particularly with the changing student demographics, aging workforce, gender inequity, and high teacher attrition rates (Brown & Butty, 1999). With so many African
American students needing role models, the lack of African American male teachers is a growing epidemic that is expected to continue to plague the field of education (Lewis, 2004; 2006).

Increasingly, attention is being paid to the work and lives of African American male inservice teachers and their impact on students at-risk of school failure. Research suggests that African American teachers possess certain characteristics that may foster their success with at-risk youth (Delpit, 1995; Kunjufu, 2002; Lynn, 2002; in press). For example, according to Delpit (1995), African American teachers are less likely to be fearful of African American students. As a result, these teachers have increased opportunities to make important personal connections with their students. Additionally, African American male teachers demonstrate a commitment to using schools as a tool for social change (Lynn, 2002).

This view of teaching is heavily aligned with the notion that students’ culture must be used as a lens to construct relevant curriculum for students whose needs may not be addressed in the mainstream curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lynn, 2002). More specifically, Lynn (in press) has shown that African American male teachers also possess a greater knowledge of and facility with “street culture” and, as a result, can use hip-hop and other forms of popular culture to connect with students considered “at-risk.” Overall, the research on African American male teachers suggests that they not only possess a commitment to working with youth that others deem “hard-to-reach” but they have the skills and capacities to do so successfully. This is an important finding given the persistent gaps in achievement between minority students and their White counterparts.
The Potential Impact of African American Male Teachers

Policymakers and practitioners have searched the literature extensively for empirical results for the impact of teachers of color, particularly African American male teachers on student achievement, especially for students of color. Unfortunately, the literature has been relatively sparse on this topic. Only a few studies (Ligons, 1992; Lopez, 1996; Gay, Dingus & Jackson, 2003) have offered empirical evidence related to teacher of color effects on student achievement. According to Gay, Dingus & Jackson (2003), the findings of this area can be summarized as follows:

(a) students of color tend to have higher academic, personal, and social performance when taught by teachers from their own ethnic group; (b) teachers from different ethnic groups have demonstrated that when students of color are taught with culturally responsive techniques and with content specific approaches usually reserved for the gifted and talented, their academic performance improves significantly; (c) teachers of color have higher performance expectations for students of color from their own ethnic group. (p. 5).

Given these major findings, it is imperative for school districts to make teachers of color, African American male teachers in particular, a priority for recruitment in classrooms.

As policymakers, teacher educators, and other constituents consider a framework (see latter part of this article) for recruiting African American male teachers, the following benefits arise from the literature for this initiative. According to the National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force (2004), more teachers of color,
particularly African American males would: (a) increase the number of role models for students of color; (b) provide opportunities for all teachers to learn about ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity; (c) enrich students’ learning because of shared racial, ethnic, and cultural identities; and (d) serve as cultural brokers, able not only to help students navigate their school environment and culture, but also to increase the involvement of other teachers and their student’s parents (p. 6). By increasing teachers of color, African American male teachers in particular, the education profession can increase its chances of closing the achievement gap of students.

Methodology

In order to provide a framework for teacher education programs and school districts to increase African American male teacher participation, it was necessary to provide a descriptive analysis of the current status of African Americans as teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, SCDE enrollments patterns for African Americans, and undergraduate and graduate student enrollment in teacher preparation programs for African American males in comparison to their white counterparts. To conduct these descriptive analyses, the researchers relied on several reliable national databases to produce data that will provide a picture of the U.S. teaching population.

The national databases included in these analyses were as follows: First, the researchers explored the School and Staffing Survey (2005) and Mini-Digest of Education Statistics (2003) from the National Center of Education Statistics. Second, the researchers analyzed descriptive data from the AACTE Survey of Teacher Education Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (2001). Finally, the researchers explored the AACTE 2002 Professional Education Data Systems (PEDS) report. This data provided
the most comprehensive look at undergraduate and graduate enrollment in teacher preparation programs. For this study, the researchers report descriptive information for African American teachers in comparison to their White counterparts.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

According to Table 1, the latest data available documents that the teaching population is still overwhelmingly White. Even though the percentage of White teachers in elementary and secondary schools dropped 2.7 percent from 1993-1994 to 2003-2004, little change has been made in the demographic make-up of the teaching population. Further, it is important to note that the African American teaching population (male and female) only increased 0.9 percent in a 10-year time period. These dismal numbers document that more must be done to have equitable representation in the teaching population.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Table 2 documents the pipeline to the field of education for White and African American students enrolled in Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education. It is worthy to note that these are students that are enrolled in education programs, who may or may not pursue the field of teaching. According to 2001 enrollment figures, change will not occur in education and the teaching demographics in the foreseeable future. This table documents that in 2001, 78 percent of students enrolled in SCDEs are White. Further, over a 6-year time period, no change has been made in the percentage of African American students enrolled in SCDEs. This data will definitely have an influence on the future demographics of the teaching population.

[Insert Table 3 about here]
Table 3 provides a descriptive analysis for undergraduate student enrollment in teacher preparation programs by gender for African American and White students. According to Table 3, White males comprised 18.9 percent of the total population in teacher preparation programs. White females comprised 61.7% of the total undergraduate student population in teacher preparation programs. Unfortunately, African American males only comprised 2.4 percent of the total undergraduate student population in teacher preparation programs. Finally, African American females comprised 5.97 percent of the total undergraduate student population in teacher preparation programs. According to these data, African American males are severely underrepresented in teacher preparation programs at the undergraduate level.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Table 4 provides a descriptive analysis for graduate student enrollment in teacher preparation programs by gender for African American and White students. According to Table 3, White males comprised 17.9 percent of the total graduate student population in teacher preparation programs. White females comprised 54.0 percent of the total graduate student population in teacher preparation programs. Unfortunately, African American males only comprised 2.5 percent of the total graduate student population in teacher preparation programs. Finally, African American females comprised 8.41 percent of the total undergraduate student population in teacher preparation programs. After examining Table 3 and Table 4, these data document that more must be done to improve the participation of African American males in undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs which serve as the primary pipeline for new teachers. As a result, a framework needs to be implemented with urgency on increasing African American male participation in the teaching profession.
Before laying out a framework that could be useful in helping teacher education programs to recruit African American males, it is important to provide a brief history of how Predominantly White Institutions of Higher Education (PWIHE) have been and continue to be successful at recruiting African American males into their athletic programs, particularly as football and basketball athletes.

*The Recruitment of African American Male Athletes at PWIHE*

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries football and basketball programs at PWIHE were almost exclusively populated and dominated by white, upper-class, Protestant males (Sage, 2000). African American student-athletes or “scholar-ballers” (see Harrison & Boyd, 2005) such as William Henry Lewis (at Amherst College and Harvard University), Paul Robeson (at Rutgers University), and Ralph Bunche (at UCLA) were the exceptions, not the rule. By the middle of the 20th century, however, changes in the political, social, and economic climate of American society and higher education motivated the leadership within PWIHE to aggressively recruit African American students in general, but African American male athletes in particular.

According to Sage (2000, p. 7):

> The impact of World War II, the 1954 Supreme Court decision forbidding separate educational facilities, the massive commercialization of collegiate sports, and the desire by White colleges and universities to benefit from talented African American athletes in building commercialized athletic programs resulted in more and more schools searching for talented Blacks to bolster their teams.

In the decades since the end of formal segregation in educational institutions, the number of African American male athletes has grown exponentially and their predominance in these once-segregated athletic programs has been evident (see Harris, 2000).
The African American male athlete has become a permanent fixture on the campuses of these PWIHE today, and a large majority of African American males who are participating in high school football and basketball are actively recruited by these educational institutions. In some cases, the informal recruitment of these African American males begins before high school. Clearly, the athletic prowess of African American males has become a commodity for these athletic programs at PWIHE that are members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and compete at the highest level of competition (i.e., Division IA). This reality has caused some people in the African American community (as well as other communities) to question why these NCAA member institutions continue to exploit the athletic talent within the African American community by recruiting African American males into their athletic programs, but not into other programs that are unrelated to athletics (e.g., teacher education/preparation programs). Given the tremendous success that these NCAA member institutions have experienced in recruiting African American males into their athletic programs, the next section of this article will outline the recruitment model that has been used by the NCAA and its member institutions as an example of how PWIHE could potentially increase the presence of African American males in their teacher education programs.

Framework for Recruiting African American Males into Teacher Education Programs

Given the previously stated literature base and the descriptive data documenting the dire need to recruit African American males into teacher education programs at colleges and universities across the country, the researchers are proposing a framework very similar to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) guidelines for
recruitment. To make the connection, the researchers will first document the recruitment process that has been successful in recruiting African American male athletes and then document how a similar model can be used to recruit African American male teacher candidates.

*Recruiting Methods Used by the NCAA*

Recruiting is a contact sport. According to the NCAA (2005-2006), recruiting occurs when contact is made between a college coach and a potential student-athlete. This contact can occur in many forms including sending written materials, watching the student practice or play, or making in-person contact with the student-athlete. The recruiting process can officially begin as early as the student’s sophomore year and can continue well into the student’s senior year in high school. While recruiting methods may vary from institution to institution, the recruiting process has become standardized through policies and procedures developed and enforced by the NCAA and other athletic governing bodies. The recruiting process is comprised of the following six steps:

1. recruiting materials
2. telephone calls
3. off-campus contact
4. evaluation
5. unofficial visits
6. official visits

*Identifying Top Recruits.* The recruiting process usually begins with a college coach sending a questionnaire to high school coaches asking them to identify the top prospects at their high school. These prospects are usually identified by grade level. This
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questionnaire requests basic demographic data as well as very sport specific information on each student, e.g. size, strength, speed, skills, and performance statistics. From this list of top recruits, the college coach then selects the students that best fit the needs of the program. Once the top high school prospects have been identified by their coaches, the college coach then sends a questionnaire to each high school student-athlete on the prospect list. Information from this list is input into a recruiting data base. This list becomes the “starter list” in the recruiting process.

Although many prospects are identified through this process, not all are. More and more, the process of recruiting is done through camps, games, and tournaments that occur outside the student-athlete’s official season. Many of these camps, games, and tournaments are sponsored by big, for-profit companies (e.g., Nike and McDonalds) with a vested interest in increasing market share amongst a select demographic group.

Technology also plays a key role in the recruiting process. Some college coaches subscribe to professional recruiting services to aid them in identifying top prospects. This type of service is usually conducted online. For a fee, the providers of the service gathers data on thousands of high school prospects and disseminates that data to college coaches.

**Recruiting Methods**

**Recruiting Materials:** Once college coaches have identified their top recruits, the next step is to send them recruiting materials. Initial contact with a prospective student-athlete typically comes in the form of a questionnaire. Recruiting materials can also take the form of personal letters from the coaching staff, athletic department publications such as media guides, newspaper and magazine articles about the program or university,
summer camp brochures, educational information about the university, or educational information published by the NCAA. In addition to the prospective student-athlete, recruiting materials are often sent to any individual responsible for rearing, teaching, or directing an activity in which the prospective student-athlete is involved including the prospective student-athlete’s parents or legal guardians and coaches.

**Telephone Calls:** If the student-athlete returns the initial questionnaire, many coaches will make telephone contact with the student-athlete. College coaches can begin making phone calls to prospective student-athletes following their junior year. Coaches at Division I and II institutions are allowed to call potential student-athletes only one time per week. Coaches at Division III institutions can call potential student-athletes as many times as they like. All electronically transmitted human voice exchanges (including videoconferencing and videophones) between an authorized institutional representative and prospective student-athletes are considered telephone calls. Students can make calls to college coaches at any time during the recruiting process. The college coach can accept calls from students as long as the calls are made at the expense of the student, not the college.

**Off-Campus Contact:** If the prospective student-athlete appears interested after contact has been made by telephone, coaches will then make off-campus contact with the student-athlete. Off-campus contact occurs any time a college coach has any face-to-face contact with, and says anything to, students or their parents outside the college’s campus. An off-campus contact also occurs when a coach has any contact with students or their parents at their high school or any location where the students are competing or practicing. During this stage of the recruiting process, many coaches will conduct a
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home visit with prospects and their parents in an effort to show the prospective student-athlete the high degree to which they are interested. A coach can contact and talk to a prospective student-athlete or their parents or legal guardians no more than three times during their senior year.

**Evaluation:** An evaluation is an activity by a coach to rate a prospective student-athlete’s academics or athletics ability. The official evaluation process occurs during the prospects senior year. During the evaluation period of the recruiting process, the coach may visit the prospect’s high school or watch the prospect practice or compete to assess athletic talent. Coaches can evaluate prospective-student athletes up to seven times during their senior year, depending on the sport. Coaches cannot have any in-person conversations with prospects or their parents or legal guardians off the college’s campus during the evaluation period. Since many coaches are not able to travel to see all prospects play in person, game film has become a vital tool in the recruiting process. Game film provides coaches with another means to be able to accurately evaluate prospects. All student-athletes who have aspirations to play at the NCAA Division I or Division II levels must register with the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. NCAA Initial Eligibility is based on a sliding scale of Grade Point Average and SAT (or ACT) scores. This will determine whether the prospective student-athlete has taken the appropriate high school courses in order to be eligible to practice, play, and receive financial aid as a college freshman. Many coaches will also make a decision on whether or not to offer a scholarship to a prospect based on the student’s athletic and academic evaluation.

**Unofficial Visit:** Any visit by prospective student-athletes and their parents to a college campus, paid for by the students or their parents is considered an unofficial visit.
Students can make as many unofficial visits as they like to a college campus. During unofficial visits, students can tour the campus, meet with admission counselors, receive complimentary admission tickets to home athletic contests, meet with the coaching staff or team members, etc., but nothing can be paid by the institution. Unofficial visits can be made by a prospective student-athlete at any time and there is no limit to the number of unofficial visits a prospect can make.

**Official Visit:** Once the coaching staff has attended a couple of games, they will make a serious attempt to get the student-athlete on campus for a visit. Any visit to a college campus by prospective student-athletes and their parents, paid for by the college, is considered an official visit. Official visits typically consist of a tour, lunch, a meeting with the coaching staff, and an overnight stay. During official visits, students can receive: transportation to and from the college; room and three meals per day; entertainment expenses; and complimentary admission to three home athletics contest. Schools are limited by association affiliation (NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA) or money allotted to that sport by the institution. Prospective student-athletes can make only one official visit per college and are allowed a maximum of five official campus visits to Division I and Division II colleges. These visits can last no longer than 48 hours. Official visits can not begin until after classes start for the prospect’s senior year.

*A Framework for Recruitment of African American Male Teacher Candidates*

The researchers will now make the connection between the NCAA model of recruitment for athletes to a framework for identifying African American male teacher candidates and increasing their presence in teacher preparation programs at colleges/universities.
Identifying Top Recruits. Teacher education programs need to become more proactive in identifying prospective African American male teacher candidates early in their high school career. This can be done by sending questionnaires to teachers, counselors and other education professionals who work with potential African American male teacher candidates in their high school settings. The questionnaire can contain basic demographic data (e.g., GPA, standardized test scores, leadership activities, etc.). Once the African American male potential recruits for teacher education programs have been identified, the Dean of a School, College or Department of Education (SCDEs) or their designee can begin to compile their database of “top recruits” for their teacher education program.

Recruiting methods for African American Teacher Candidates

Recruiting Materials. Once education deans have identified their top African American male teacher candidates, the next step is to send them recruiting materials. Recruiting materials can take the form of personal letters from the dean of education, education department publications (e.g., alumni newsletters, newspaper and magazine articles and information about the college/university). Additionally, recruiting materials should be sent to family members or guardians responsible for rearing the potential recruit. Moore (2003) reported that the recruitment involving the family is especially important for African American students who go on to college.

Telephone Calls. If the African American male teacher recruit expresses an interest in the teacher education program, a representative of the program should make telephone contact with the African American male teacher recruit. An advantage for teacher education programs is that they are not restricted when they can start making calls
to recruits like their athletic department counterparts. Once initial telephone calls have been made and an African American male teacher recruit expresses a stronger interest in the program, SCDE officials should also provide follow-up telephone calls to family members as well. SCDE officials should encourage the African American male teacher recruit or family members to make calls to a selected SCDE representative at any time.

**Off-Campus Contact.** If the African American male teacher recruit appears interested after contact has been made by telephone, SCDE representatives should make off-campus contact with the African American male teacher recruit. This off-campus contact can occur when SCDE representatives meet with the African American male teacher recruit at their high school or other designated location. During this stage of the recruiting process, SCDE representatives should explore the option of home visitation to show the African American male teacher recruit how interested they are in their attendance at their college/university. The off-campus contact between African American male teacher recruits and SCDE representatives are not restricted by any governing bodies like the NCAA.

**Evaluation.** During the evaluation phase, SCDEs can begin to fully evaluate the African American male teacher recruits academic ability with the possibility of providing a scholarship. This can be done by meetings with the African American male teacher recruit, school counselors, teachers and other educational professionals. The purpose of this meeting is to have a focused review of the African American male teacher recruit academic credentials. Also, this will allow the SCDE official to have an in-depth conversation with the education professionals that have worked with the African American male teacher recruit during their matriculation through high school.
At this time, the SCDE representative can make a determination if the African American male teacher recruit has the academic eligibility to be admitted to the university and whether they will be eligible for a scholarship. By this thorough review, a decision can be made if the SCDE is going to commit to the African American male teacher recruit.

**Unofficial Visits.** African American male teacher candidates should be encouraged to make unofficial visits to the campus. These visits can be paid for by the recruit or their family members. During this time, they should be encouraged to make unofficial visits the campus as often as possible. This will allow the African American male teacher recruit to tour the campus, meet with admission counselors, etc. Also, this would be a great time for African American male teacher recruits to meet informally with the dean and other faculty/staff. By promoting unofficial visits to the campus, African American male teacher recruits can use this as a good measuring tool if the university and surrounding community will be a good match.

**Official Visits.** Once a teacher education program has gone through the first five stages of this model, they should make an aggressive attempt to bring the African American male teacher recruit on campus for an official visit. SCDEs will be smart to use some of their developmental or discretionary funds to cover the African American male teacher recruit travel expenses. During the official visit, African American male teacher recruits should have an opportunity to meet with the Dean to understand their vision for the SCDE. Also, a SCDE representative should clearly explain the admission requirements, course work involved, standardized testing requirements and student teaching requirements. Also, this is an opportunity for SCDE officials to discuss any job
fairs they may host at the institution. Finally, SCDEs should have these official visits during the senior year of the African American male teacher recruit as this may be the time when these students are seriously exploring postsecondary options.

Discussion

So what can be made of the proposal of this framework for the recruitment of African American males into teacher education programs? This proposal provides new thinking, not previously reported in the literature, in how to recruit teacher education candidates, particularly African American males using a model adopted from the NCAA. The extant literature for this study has documented that African American males are basically non-existent in teacher education programs and in the K-12 teaching force. According to the National Education Association [NEA] (2001), African American males are only 1% of the K-12 teaching population and only 2.4% of the students in teacher preparation programs.

Research has documented that African American male teachers possess certain characteristics that may foster success with at-risk youth (Delpit, 1995; Kunjufu, 2002; Lynn 2002; 2006). As stated earlier in this paper, Delpit (1995) noted that African American teachers are less likely to be fearful of African American students. As a result, the field of education now has an opportunity to broaden its horizons and produce teachers who can have an opportunity to make important connections with their students.

We learn that the field of education has to make it a priority to recruit minority male teachers, particularly African American male teachers into teacher education programs. The literature has documented that many K-12 students in this country can
matriculate through their entire K-12 career and not see an African American male
teacher in their classroom (Gursky, Rose, & Moss, 2004). This phenomenon can not
continue if the field of education wants to improve the academic achievement of all
students particularly students of color. Students of color need to see role models who
look like themselves in the classroom. Lewis (2006) reported that African American male
teachers are role models because they provide “real” illustrations that African American
males can be more than athletes, entertainers and inmates. This is especially important for
African American males given that most want to be like those they see (Kunjufu, 1994).
The framework of recruiting African American male teacher candidates using an athletic
model holds promise for the future of diversifying the teacher workforce. By providing a
direction for teacher education programs, strategies for implementation can be formulated
to make this issue a priority within their individual institutions.

Recommendations for Teacher Education Programs

To increase the presence of African American males in teacher education
programs across the country, the role of SCDE representatives will be of critical
importance. After examining the extant literature and the framework presented in this
study, there are several recommendations for teacher education programs:

1. Review the framework for recruitment of African American males into teacher
education programs and pull together a SCDE executive committee to develop
action plans to begin the recruitment process of African American male teacher
candidates.

2. Solicit support for this initiative from key representatives at the institution (e.g.,
   president, provost, admissions director, development officer, etc.).
3. Collaborate with school districts to support this effort and publicize the future job opportunities for African American male teacher recruits who may complete this program.

Recommendations for High School Education Professionals

For the recruitment of African American males to be recruited into teacher education programs, the roles of high school education professionals in the recruitment process is crucial to make this initiative work. The following recommendations are provided:

1. Every attempt should be made to collaborate with SCDE representatives who are seeking information (i.e., GPA, transcripts, leadership activities, etc.) on potential African American male teacher recruits. By responding in a timely manner, this can assist the African American males to be recruited into teacher education programs and possibly receive academic scholarship to colleges/universities.

2. Promote the formulation or expansion of Future Teachers Clubs at your school site. By doing so, education professionals can increase the awareness of teaching as a profession. Also, this will be an excellent opportunity for African American males to get their first exposure to what teaching is all about.

3. High schools would benefit by bringing African American male guest speakers who are teacher educators at colleges/universities. This would provide real examples of African American males who are working in education.
Conclusion

Over 50 years after the *Brown* decision, an emerging literature base (Lewis, 2006; Tillman, 2004) has documented the dire need for African American males to enter the teaching force. In many urban areas, African American students or other students of color do not have African American males in their classrooms as teachers and the field of education should make it a priority to reverse this trend. On a large scale, the only teachers these students see are usually White and female.

The framework presented in this paper can serve as a foundation for the approximately 1,300 teacher preparation programs in the United States to become more active in recruiting African American males into their teacher education programs. We have seen the success of this framework in athletic recruitment, now it is time to apply this same framework to the field of education to bring about change in the diversity of the teacher workforce.
References


Table 1
*Public Elementary and Secondary School Teachers by Race/Ethnicity, 1993-1994 and 2003-2004 (in percent) for Selected Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>84.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Percentages were calculated using the total teaching population as the base.

Table 2
*SCDE enrollments by Race and Ethnicity for 1995 and 2001 (in percent) for Selected Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Percentages were calculated using the total teaching population as the base.*

*Source: AACTE, Survey of Teacher Education enrollments by Race, Ethnicity and Gender, 2002.*
Table 3  
Undergraduate Student Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (2001) for Selected Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>5.97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Percentages were calculated using the total teaching population as the base.*

*Sources: AACTE, Survey of Teacher Education enrollments by Race, Ethnicity and Gender (2002).  
AACTE, Professional Education Data System (PEDS) (2002).*
Table 4
Graduate Student Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (2001) for Selected Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
<td>8.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Percentages were calculated using the total teaching population as the base.

*Sources:* AACTE, Survey of Teacher Education enrollments by Race, Ethnicity and Gender (2002).
AACTE, Professional Education Data System (PEDS) (2002).
Figure 1: A conceptual model of the framework for recruiting African American male teachers into teacher education programs.