

# **Giving Black Boys the Start They Deserve**



An Action Plan  
To Transform  
Their Preschool  
Experience

**preschool**  
  
**PROMISE**

Dayton & Montgomery County, Ohio

February 2022

**For nearly a year, we have led a group of 15 men who have delved into the important issue of what needs to change to give our Black Preschool boys the great start they deserve.** It is significant that this group was composed of Black men who value education and have a demonstrated passion and commitment to improving the lives and experiences of youth in our community. Together, we tackled this problem at the request of Dayton-Montgomery County Preschool Promise, which is intensely focused on closing gaps in Kindergarten readiness for all Montgomery County children, but particularly for Black young learners and especially Black boys.

National, state and our local data show that Black boys start school behind their peers – often significantly behind. **When children start school behind, they are at risk of never catching up – with learning gaps tragically compounding year over year.** This stubborn phenomenon profoundly disadvantages our young men first in school and then in life and on the job.

[Implicit bias and low expectations](#) can lead to even the most well-meaning teachers putting Black boys at a significant disadvantage, **expecting them to underperform and even misbehave.**

**Our objective is not to point fingers, but rather to make recommendations that add up to an action plan for righting what's wrong – at the beginning of the boys' school careers.** As men of color who care deeply about our sons, grandsons, brothers, nephews and Black boys in our community, we want to promote solutions that give them bright futures.

Over the last year, this remarkable group of men have met nearly every month, cumulatively volunteering over 360 hours. We have heard from parents of young Black boys and from Preschool teachers and administrators who are grappling with how to better serve children of color. As a group, we also reflected on and shared our personal experiences. Based on these conversations, we have created actionable recommendations to help transform Black boys' experiences in early learning.

We are grateful to our fellow Committee members and to Preschool Promise, which brought us together and is committed to implementing our recommendations. **We are especially proud to point to the actionable nature of our ideas and that some are already being implemented.**

Sincerely,



**Rev. Joshua D. Ward**  
Pastor  
Omega Baptist Church

*Joshua D. Ward*



**Jonathan Washington**  
President, CEO  
Gem City Heat

*Jonathan Washington*

**“We need to provide safe spaces for Black boys to express themselves. The more men who get involved (in the classroom), the more opportunities boys will have.”**

“Black boys and men are characterized as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ based on their social behavior. ... We need to have external support services where Black men go into schools to help boys develop social skills.”

## What the **committee** did

The Committee members met monthly from February 2021 to February 2022, during which time they heard from Preschool teachers, Preschool administrators, parents of Black boys, and other education experts. The Committee members listened to diverse voices and shared their own experiences to develop the recommendations presented in this report.

We heard from four administrators and four teachers about how they engage with boys and address racial equity in their classrooms. We also heard from four mothers of Black boys who had just finished Preschool. They shared their perspectives on their sons’ experiences in the Preschool classroom, where far too often the boys are bored. The parents also expressed their concerns about the lack of Black male representation in the classroom.

During these emotional and thought-provoking conversations over the last year, an idea emerged to create a new year-long Professional Learning Community to train Preschool teachers how to foster supportive relationships with Black boys in their classrooms.

Three committee members volunteered to serve on a subcommittee to write the curriculum for this new training, and subsequently agreed to facilitate the “Bridging the Gap: Becoming Black Boy-Friendly Teachers” training that was launched in Fall 2021. Other subcommittees met to further refine recommendations on building a volunteer/mentor program to encourage more Black male involvement in the classroom.

A list of committee members is provided at the end of the report and a summary of meeting agenda topics can be found in Appendix 1.



## What we know from the data

The committee members spent time understanding the data about Black boys in Preschool settings. Below is a summary of data that helped direct the discussion and recommendations outlined in this report.

**Bias negatively impacts our Black boys.** Research by Yale University’s Dr. Walter Gilliam poignantly documents the existence of implicit bias in the context of Preschool. Early childhood educators were asked to watch a video of young children and told to push a button when they saw what could become challenging behavior – except none of the children was misbehaving. Eye scan technology showed that teachers reflexively surveilled the Black children, and especially Black boys, at a disproportionate rate.

(Dr. Gilliam spoke in Dayton at the 2017 Learn to Earn Dayton Readiness Summit. Watch his keynote [here](#).)

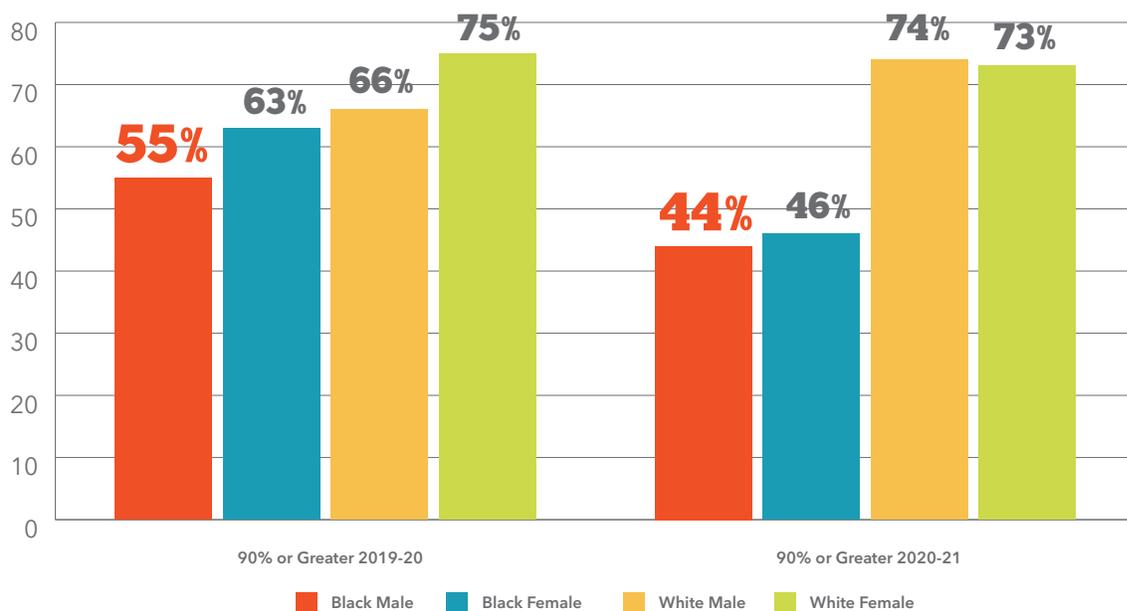
Research like this is a wake-up call for all teachers, including those who sincerely believe they treat all children equitably and are earnestly dedicated to doing so. The point of Dr. Gilliam’s research is not to indict early educators, but to help us all understand:

- ✓ Systemic racism is real.
- ✓ All of us see color.
- ✓ Everyone has implicit biases.
- ✓ We must intentionally work to overcome the “affinity bias” of preferring and favoring people like ourselves.

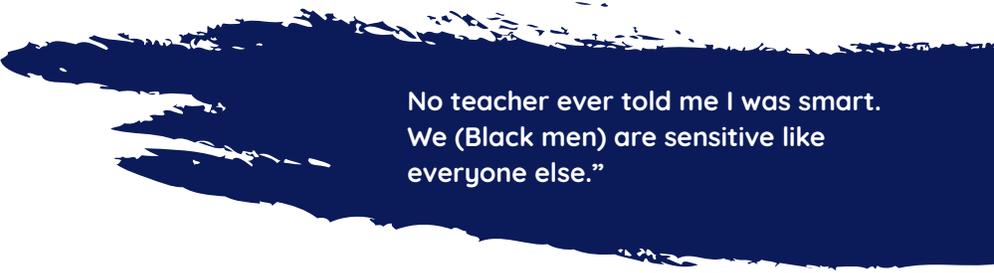
**Discipline rates are higher for Black boys.** [Black boys are suspended and expelled more frequently](#) than other students, including in Preschool.

**Attendance is lower for Black boys.** Preschool Promise’s goal is for children to attend Preschool on a regular basis with a target attendance rate of 90%. Only about half (55%) of our Black boys meet this all-important target.

% of Preschool Promise children with a 90% attendance rate by race/ethnicity, gender



**Academic measures show Black boys' potential is not being tapped or developed.** Preschool Promise collects student assessment data in the Fall and Spring of each school year. Black boys typically score below Black girls and white boys and girls. This is not a measure of their abilities. Not insignificantly, formal assessments tend to be developed by white educators and may disadvantage Black boys. There also is some evidence that teachers tend to have lower expectations for boys than they do for girls.



### **Black boys rarely have a teacher who looks like them.**

Some studies have shown that students do better in school when they have a teacher of their same race.



It's estimated that **fewer than 20%** of Preschool teachers are Black men.

**>80%** of white Preschoolers are in classrooms with a white teacher

**<50%** of Black students have a Black teacher

**41%** of Black males and **46%** of Black females

After being unfairly disciplined, misjudged and under served in classrooms day after day, too many young Black men fail to graduate high school or go on to earn degrees and credentials. We must ensure that young Black boys feel visible, respected, valued and loved – from the start.

## **What we heard from the community**

Over the last year, the Committee has spoken with families of young Black boys, early educators and administrators, and we have discussed our personal experiences.

At the risk of oversimplifying our work and these rich, touching and substantive conversations, the following are just some of the statements we heard and believe:

- We want our boys to love learning and being in school.
- Teachers need to connect with Black boys, nurture their talent and see them as bright, curious, joyful, energetic and sensitive.
- Teachers must have high expectations for the boys – they live up to what is expected of them.
- Beginning in Preschool, Black boys need to see men who look like them in the classroom – both as teachers and as frequent visitors.

- We need to engage the fathers of our Black boys in learning at home and in the classroom.
- Classrooms too often are feminized, favoring the preferences of female teachers and female young learners.
- Too often Black boys' behavior is labeled as anger when, in fact, it's disappointment, frustration or a response to rejection or trauma.
- Having a strong sense of empathy is a prerequisite for teaching children and should not be confused with low expectations.
- Misbehavior often is a physiological and predictable response for children who are experiencing trauma and chaos.
- What's good for Black boys is good for all children.
- Training – around theory and especially practice in the classroom – is essential for our early educators.
- We often underestimate the impact positive relationships between teachers and parents have on Black boys.
- If teachers are hesitant to build relationships with Black men, they'll most likely not have strong relationships with Black boys in the classroom.

Palmer Jason, who is a Director of a child care site, told a story about a conversation he had with one of the boys in his center.

**“Why don’t you want to come to school?”** asked Palmer.

**“Because it’s boring,”** said the young boy.

**“I want you to tell the teacher that you’re bored, the teacher has to know that.”** So the young boy told his teacher.

The point is that WE have to change. If classrooms are boring, the adults have to change.

**Based on our review of research and on conversations with families, teachers and administrators, the Committee chose to prioritize the following problem statements as they crafted their recommendations:**

- 1) **Preschool teachers too often are unaware of their own bias.**** Teachers have not learned about their implicit bias and its detrimental impact on children in their classrooms.
- 2) **Learning environments are not geared toward boys.**** During their college education and training, prospective teachers are not learning how to create boy-friendly classrooms.
- 3) **There are very few Black males in early childhood classrooms.**** Early childhood education is female-dominated, which results in boys seeing few, if any, male role models in their classrooms. Female teachers, especially white teachers, usually do not know how to involve Black males in their classrooms.

# Our recommendations

In response to the challenges that were identified, the Committee members developed three recommendations that Preschool Promise could implement as it partners with Preschool sites in our community. These three recommendations do not address all of the challenges identified; however, they are actionable steps that will better prioritize Black boys in early childhood education classrooms.

## Action 1:

### Require annual implicit bias and equity training for all Preschool Promise teachers, coaches, administrators and staff.

**Rationale:** Preschool teachers often are unaware of their bias and the negative impact it has on children in their classrooms. Training and reflection are critical to building a classroom “ecosystem” that supports Black children, particularly Black boys, ensuring they are treated equitably. Most teachers have never had this type of training and Preschool Promise is in a position to offer it.

**Implementation strategy:** Preschool Promise should develop a comprehensive, multi-year training plan that includes Preschool Promise staff, contractors, coaches and Preschool teachers and administrators. This training should be a mandatory prerequisite for participating in other Preschool Promise opportunities, including receiving teacher stipends or “Quality Dollars.” The goal should be to help all leaders working with Preschool Promise to consider ways they can change their programs and practices to prioritize success for all children, with a focus on Black boys.

Before rolling out the required training to all teachers and directors, it is recommended that Preschool Promise staff, coaches and key contractors participate in the training.

## Voices from the community

“If a man is a chaperone on a field trip or helps with a class activity, that can be impactful in changing the dynamic of a class full of boys. If we can’t get males to teach, maybe we can ask males to show up to be a mentor with one or two boys for a year.”

Preschool Director

My son likes to take things apart and put them back together. Someone could jump to the conclusion that he is being destructive if they see him taking something apart. Really, he is curious and may be bored.

Parent of a Black boy  
Preschooler

(I appreciated that) They saw my son as a child having a bad day, not as a ‘bad’ child.

Parent of a Black boy  
Preschooler

## Action 2:

### Provide year-long training cohorts focused on helping teachers understand and prioritize Black boys.

**Rationale:** This commitment goes beyond the aforementioned required annual equity and implicit bias training. For teachers who are ready to dive deeper into becoming a boy-friendly teacher, Preschool Promise should provide an in-depth, year-long Professional Learning Community that will address cultural competency, equitable classrooms and boy-focused teaching methods.

**Implementation strategy:** Preschool Promise already offers targeted training on creating boy-friendly classrooms. It is recommended that Preschool Promise continue to expand its professional development that calls out the need for teachers to examine their attitudes and teaching practices as they relate to Black boys. Implementation success will depend on effective sharing of new knowledge to promote growth and competency.

“There should be a push to attract men to early childhood education jobs. The field is dominated by women — men don’t see it as a viable career because of the pay.”

## Action 3:

### Champion an initiative to ensure that Preschool Promise children have consistent exposure to Black men by bringing men of color into their classrooms as volunteers.

**Rationale:** Early childhood education is a female-dominated profession, resulting in boys seeing few male – and particularly few Black – role models in their classrooms. Having a male occasionally come into a classroom is insufficient. Children need regular and consistent exposure to Black male role models.

**Implementation strategy:** Preschool Promise should institutionalize a program that recruits Black male volunteers, including police, judges, firefighters, pilots, chefs, tradesmen, etc., to visit Preschool classrooms. Ideally, men would visit classrooms twice per month over the course of a school year. Some men may read or play games with the children. Others may share about their profession or teach a skill. This program should include free background checks for participants; an organized orientation to Preschool that will train volunteers about age-appropriate activities; and a stipend to acknowledge the volunteers’ investment of time.

In addition to recruiting adults, Preschool Promise should explore the possibility of connecting Black high-school males with Preschool classrooms, potentially as part of a class and/or for a stipend. This would expose high school students to the teaching field, provide meaningful mentors for young children, and provide a meaningful experience for the young high school men.



## What we've **already accomplished**

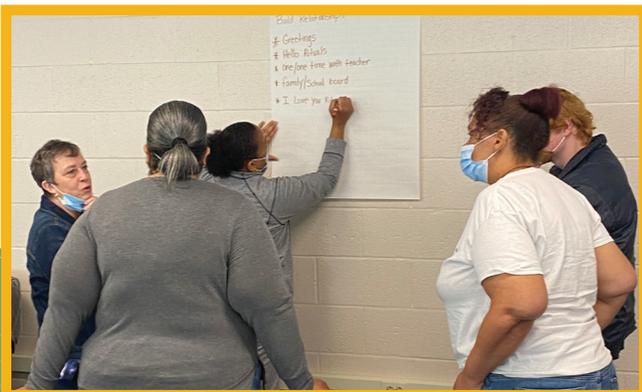
In recognition of the urgency of this work, in October 2021, Preschool Promise began a Boy-Friendly Teacher cohort aptly titled “Bridging the Gap: Becoming the Teacher Who Builds Black Boy-Friendly Classrooms.” This training extended over the 2021-22 school year and was led by three members of our Committee (Trey Clements, Christopher James and Palmer Jason) and Kwanah Bronaugh (Preschool Promise contractor).

We were thrilled that 50 early childhood educators applied to participate in this monthly Professional Learning Community. Preschool Promise intentionally limited this pilot to 30 early educators who were selected based on their commitment and eagerness to grow. Preschool Promise prioritized those who applied as a team (administrators, lead teachers and assistant teachers) to ensure consistent and comprehensive application of all they learned.

In the first four months of this pilot, participants explored their own biases and perspectives. Teachers also discussed their desire to involve Black men in their classroom.

Preschool Promise intends to continue this program and invite higher education professionals to observe the training with the goal of influencing similar teaching in colleges’ and universities’ instruction of their teacher candidates. The facilitators of this cohort will also adapt this model for the K-12 learning environment.

“Pay attention to what they (Black boys) like. If they like baseball, find books about baseball. Gear things toward their interests.”



## What needs to happen next

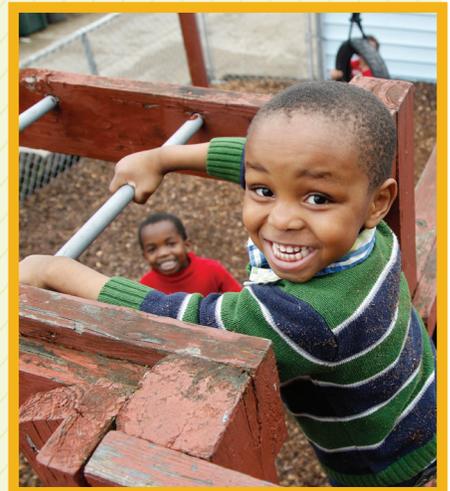
“Our boys need to learn how to express sadness and emotions in a healthy way. Give them space to feel.”

As this work continues, we hope there will be other initiatives designed to close the experience and education gap for families and children of color.

Transforming Black children’s early education experiences is imperative if we want young learners to go on to reach their potential as adults on the job and in our community.

Beyond the recommendations provided above, we also encourage Preschool Promise and others to:

- Create positive and welcoming environments for Black boys in public settings.
- Disaggregate and analyze data to identify gaps in educational services for persons of color. Call out gaps in positive results and outcomes.
- Educate stakeholders and clients about the persistent educational gaps for children of color. Organize “data walks” where participants – and especially families with children – are shown local statistics about children’s achievement and the lack of opportunity for Black and Brown children and those experiencing poverty.
- Employers and institutions should conduct diversity audits to identify strengths and weaknesses with regard to meeting their own goals and commitments around diversity and equity.



# Committee members



**Rev. Joshua D. Ward**  
Senior Pastor,  
Omega Baptist Church  
**(Co-Chair)**



**Jonathan Washington**  
Administrative  
Director,  
Gem City Heat  
**(Co-Chair)**



**Devon Berry**  
Director  
of Human  
Resources, West  
Carrollton City  
Schools



**Jonathan Cain**  
CEO, Future  
Stars of Dayton



**Trey Clements**  
Assistant Professor,  
Education  
Department,  
Sinclair Community  
College



**Cris Henderson**  
Teacher  
Aide, Miami  
Valley Child  
Development  
Centers



**Christopher James**  
College Credit  
Plus Coordinator,  
Sinclair Community  
College



**Palmer Jason**  
Lead Pastor, Jubilee  
Community Church  
Managing Director,  
Good Shepherd  
Academy



**Bernard Jones, Jr.**  
Chief Operations  
Officer, Reviving  
A Village  
Solutions



**James R. (JR) Lampkins**  
Executive Chef/  
Dietary Services  
Manager,  
Stonespring of  
Vandalia



**Stephan Marcellus**  
Recreation  
Division  
Manager,  
City of Dayton



**The Honorable Jeffrey Mims**  
Mayor of the  
City of Dayton



**Michael Newsom**  
Fatherhood  
Director,  
Montgomery  
County



**Marlon Shackelford**  
President,  
Black Brothers/  
Sisters  
Involvement

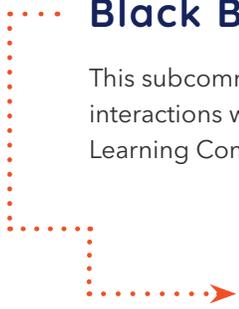


**C. Ralph Wilcoxson, II**  
Attorney  
& Counselor  
at Law

We gratefully acknowledge Committee members who participated in subcommittees to further develop the recommendations of the full Committee.

## Black Boy-Friendly Teacher Cohort Subcommittee

This subcommittee helped develop a curriculum for Preschool teachers to guide them in their interactions with Black boys in the classroom and then assisted in implementing a pilot Professional Learning Community with a cohort of 30 Preschool teachers and administrators.



Trey Clements	Palmer Jason
Christopher James	Kwanah Bronaugh, Staff

## Enrichment Partners Subcommittee

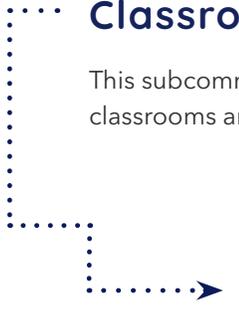
This subcommittee clarified the type of enrichment activities that may not typically be offered to children in Preschool settings and began identifying Black men willing to volunteer on a regular, recurring basis.



Devon Berry	Jonathan Washington
James R. (JR) Lampkins	Ralph Wilcoxson
Stephan Marcellus	

## Classroom Volunteers and Mentoring Subcommittee

This subcommittee clarified what kind of mentoring is age-appropriate for Black boys in Preschool classrooms and began identifying Black men willing to volunteer on a regular, recurring basis.



Bernard Jones, Jr.	Marlon Shackelford
Mayor Jeffrey Mims	Rev. Joshua Ward
Mike Newsom	

## APPENDIX 1: Committee Meeting Topics

Agenda	Key Takeaways
<p><b>February 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions and review of the purpose of the Committee</li> <li>• Review of Preschool Promise data about Black boys</li> </ul>	
<p><b>March 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of research by Yale University’s Dr. Walter Gilliam on bias in Preschool teachers</li> <li>• Panel of Preschool teachers (two male and two female teachers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys are more physically active than girls. Preschool teachers want children to sit still, assuming that’s a prerequisite for learning.</li> <li>• Teachers should receive education about implicit bias during college and professional development.</li> <li>• Male role models are needed in the classroom. Fathers often don’t engage with providers as much as mothers.</li> <li>• Preschool and other child care providers are underpaid, which is likely the reason men are not often found in the field.</li> </ul>
<p><b>April 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Boys Won’t Be Boys</i> TEDx talk</li> <li>• <i>Why Does Gender Matter?</i></li> <li>• Guest: Kwanah Bronaugh spoke about <u>Wired to Move</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys will become what we teach them to become; we must show them what is possible.</li> <li>• Conduct grades can hold just as much weight as academic scores. Teachers must make an effort to get to know boys.</li> <li>• Re <u>Wired to Move</u> (the book and Preschool Promise training): When boys are physically active, their brain is active. Teachers need to learn how to accommodate boys’ different ways of learning and their need for physical activity in the classroom.</li> </ul>
<p><b>May 2021</b></p> <p>Discussion of actions to address concerns heard to date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a dashboard for local data and resources for teaching Black boys in Preschool (Padlet).</li> <li>• Offer Implicit bias teaching as a foundation for Preschool Promise teachers.</li> <li>• Provide training and tools to improve inclusiveness of Preschool Promise classrooms.</li> <li>• Involve males, especially fathers, in the classroom.</li> <li>• Offer training to teachers about how to involve Black men in the classroom.</li> <li>• Create spaces outside the classroom for boys to learn about life.</li> <li>• Consider interviewing Preschool boys.</li> </ul>

If we are going to close the gap, we have to be willing to change the environment, not the boys. Why do I have to sit ‘crisscross applesauce’ and just listen to the story? I want to move!

Palmer Jason

## APPENDIX 1: Committee Meeting Topics, continued

Agenda	Key Takeaways
<p><b>June 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation by Dr. Debra Brathwaite: <i>Implicit bias and the underachievement of Black boys in the early childhood setting.</i></li> <li>• Moving Committee ideas to action</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="251 730 738 1024" style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; background-color: #f9c74f; color: white; text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Personal accountability and intentionality are what will change our classrooms.</p> <p>Trey Clements</p> </div>	<p>Children who attend Preschool programs experience academic, social and behavioral gains, especially when teachers understand how race, gender and cultural backgrounds impact academic achievement and success. Teachers must be responsive at modifying their instructional strategies to how Black boys learn. Because Black males’ experiences in education are often negative, it is critical that we have a sense of urgency to eliminate practices that are counterproductive and detrimental.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three Committee members have begun meeting to develop a curriculum for teachers to help them foster relationships and help combat implicit bias about Black boys, and to help teachers involve Black men in Preschool classrooms. Preschool Promise will start this pilot training in September.</li> <li>• The committee discussed developing a program to bring Black men into Preschool classrooms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>July 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrator panel from Preschool Promise provider programs (including 2 owners)</li> <li>• Updates on Committee ideas being put into action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial disparities include Black boys scoring lower than their peers on assessments. There was discussion of where Black teachers are employed and their wages; and recruiting Black men for teaching positions.</li> <li>• Approximately 10% of Preschool students are on medication related to behavior problems.</li> <li>• Proposed supports included training for staff on implicit bias; group of men to mentor young boys; families prioritizing their children’s education.</li> <li>• Curriculum on how to teach Black boys.</li> <li>• Space for Black boys in libraries.</li> <li>• The Committee brainstormed ideas re recruiting volunteers for Preschool classrooms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>August 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel: 2 mothers of Black boys who just finished Preschool</li> <li>• Invitation to join Subcommittees: Enrichment Partners; Classroom Volunteers and Mentors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No male teachers but one center has male owners who are present sometimes.</li> <li>• Challenging behavior was treated as the “child having a bad day” rather than labeling the child.</li> <li>• Black male role models are important, yet lacking in schools and that is a concern for their sons’ futures.</li> </ul>

Agenda	Key Takeaways
<p><b>September 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Panel 3: 2 additional mothers of Black boys who just finished Preschool</li> <li>Updates on Committee ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation in the classroom makes a difference in helping Black boys during an impressionable time. Cultural affirmations are important especially for Black boys in the (mostly white) suburbs.</li> <li>Preschool provider alerted mother to son’s need for speech therapy. Now that he is in a public school, the IEP process is challenging and frustrating. Her son may have autism, and she believes the school is making it difficult to get his assessment and services.</li> <li>Request for Preschool Promise to offer parents (especially single moms) an additional six months of support as their child goes into Kindergarten, such as a child advocate who could walk into classrooms or who could go to meetings with the mom.</li> <li>A mental health component to early education may help children be better prepared for Kindergarten.</li> </ul>
<p><b>October 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates on Committee ideas</li> <li>Reviewing problems and solutions: Are there other actions to be taken?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black Boy-Friendly Teacher Cohort (Bridging the Gap) began with 30 teachers enrolled.</li> <li>Enrichment partners: Black males will be recruited to volunteer in Preschool classrooms. Brainstormed potential volunteers for pilot that will work with Bridging the Gap cohort.</li> <li>Mentors discussed along with Rites of Passage, which is currently not developed for Preschool-aged children.</li> </ul>
<p><b>November 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subcommittee updates</li> <li>Draft outline of Recommendations Report reviewed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrichment partners: More structure and details added to plan for pilot. Committee members requested to provide contact information for potential volunteers.</li> <li>Classroom volunteers and mentors: Partner with high schools (Dayton Public, Trotwood) so Black young men can volunteer in Preschool classrooms. Adapt Rites of Passage for Preschool-aged children and pilot; could be first in the country.</li> </ul>
<p><b>December 2021</b></p> <p>No meeting</p>	
<p><b>January 2022</b></p> <p>Bridging the Gap Cohort night</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select Committee members visited the Bridging the Gap Cohort.</li> </ul>
<p><b>February 2022</b></p> <p>Review final draft of Recommendations Report and provide feedback</p>	<p>Final Recommendations Report submitted to Preschool Promise Board.</p>

## APPENDIX 2: The Art of the Boy-Friendly Classroom Checklist

	Yes	No	Reflections
<b>Visible</b>			
1. There is a visible schedule for children that is posted and referred to daily.			
2. There are visual rules/commitments posted for children and referenced daily.			
3. Toys and shelves are labeled for easier clean up in each interest area.			
4. A visual cue accompanies the audio cue at clean-up time.			
<b>Gross Motor</b>			
1. There are toys with wheels that children can manipulate outside (trucks, cars, etc.).			
2. There is an outdoor playground that allows for running, jumping, climbing.			
3. There is an indoor gross motor space used for inclement weather days.			
<b>Environment</b>			
1. There is a cool-down area where visual self-regulating techniques are posted.			
2. The block area allows enough space for the creation of big and wide building structures.			
3. There are toys with wheels that children can manipulate inside (trucks, cars, etc.).			
4. Children can choose whether they want to sit or stand during table activities. (This does not include meal time.)			
5. Games and materials to strengthen fine motor skills are accessible to children daily.			
6. There is adequate elbow room when children are expected to be at the table.			
<b>Relationships/Social Skills</b>			
1. The family information form is accessible to teachers, and it is used to learn about children's family, their likes/dislikes, interests, fears, etc.			
2. The family information form includes space to add the child's father's contact information, regardless of parents' marital status.			
3. Classroom activities are relevant to the children's lives.			
4. Feelings are taught using visuals.			
5. Children's names are pronounced correctly.			

	Yes	No	Reflections
<b>Partnering with Families</b>			
1. Formal and/or informal communication happens with each family weekly.			
2. Families know how to reach their child's teacher by at least 2 methods of communication.			
3. Staff know and address the child's family by name (all primary caregivers).			
4. Fathers are encouraged to participate in the classroom.			
5. There is a list of volunteer opportunities that parents can choose from and that is shared with all families.			
<b>Routines</b>			
1. There are at least 30 minutes daily where children can engage in unstructured physical play.			
2. Children go outside daily – weather permitting. (Weather permitting may include light snow or rain.)			
3. No more than 15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the afternoon are dedicated to formal lessons – letters, numbers, shapes, etc. (except for children who request longer).			
4. Movement is incorporated into circle time daily.			
5. Circle time is no longer than 15 minutes.			
6. The sensory table is filled daily and is accessible to children for the majority of the day.			
7. Activities requiring children to cross the midline are a part of the daily routine.			
8. Circle time is cut short if children are unengaged or extremely fidgety.			
<b>Media/Social Influence</b>			
1. Gun play is addressed in a non-shaming way.			
2. Constructive Super Hero play is permitted in the classroom.			
3. Real-world toys (tools, old appliances, household items) are used in the classroom.			
4. Male volunteers are involved in the classroom at least 2 times per month.			

This checklist was modified from the original "Boy Friendly Checklist" created by Starting Point Child Care Resource & Referral Agency in Cuyahoga County. This modified version was created by KB Educational Staffing Services for Preschool Promise, Inc.



# preschool PROMISE

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Rev. 3/25/22