

**Richland County School District
One Male Empowerment Summit:**

**Dream It, See It, Do It, Live It:
Building a Resilient, Competent and Confident Young Man**

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Key words: **Building a Resilient, Competent, and Confident Young Man.**

Funding Sources:

General Fund from Dropout Prevention Budget

Project Cost and Budget Narrative:**Budget**

Student Transportation	1,200.00
Print Shop	1,000.00
Lunch for Students (Subway)	4,000.00
Wrist Bands	1,200.00
Drawstring Bags	2,000.00
T-Shirts	3,000.00
Books (7 Skills to Make Mills by Brooks Harper)	4,536.00
Misc.	1,000.00
Total	<u>\$17,936.00</u>

Project Description:

The Male Empowerment Summit was designed to provide eighth-grade males from across the district with the necessary soft skills that will be beneficial to their success in school and life. The goal was: 1) to provide strategies on how to develop a process to achieve life and career goals, 2) to provide the young men life and career characteristics as outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate (See Attachment A, Profile of the South Carolina Graduate), 3) to provide the young men with the opportunity to learn about life experiences from successful men in the community. The Summit was held at the Olympia Learning Center which is home to the district's alternative school, the Office of Dropout Prevention and the district's professional development and training facility.

Staffing Pattern:

90 adult men mentors from the community and 30 support staff members from Richland One School District. Those mentors included: the Mayor of the City of Columbia, Chief and Deputy Chief of Columbia Police Department, the County Sheriff, Members of the School Board, teachers, lawyers, truck drivers, doctors, business owners, college students, pastors, etc.

Population Served:

- 15 workshop sessions daily
- Two general sessions daily
- Students attended two workshops and both general sessions
- 524 8th grade male participants from nine middle schools

Project Origination:

Richland School District One is committed to improving outcomes for students. To accomplish this task, we must pay attention to certain areas to have the positive impact we desire. After reviewing district discipline data and academic data, it was obvious that our males were not having the desired outcomes. We decided to partner with our community members to sponsor the Male Empowerment Summit.

Issues Addressed:

The goal was to have students participate in a variety of workshops focused on those soft skills that will be beneficial to their success in school and life; personal growth, mentoring, critical thinking, and decision-making skills was covered. Each student was to leave the Summit with at least three goals they will strive to accomplish before the end of the school year. Our overall purpose was to provide them with information to assist them in increasing their success in high school and life.

Desired Outcomes and Measurable Objectives:

The desired outcome was to Build a Resilient, Competent and Confident Young Man by having men from the community provide them with the necessary strategies needed to be successful in life. The objectives were:

- To provide strategies on how to develop a process to achieve life and career goals
- To provide the young men life and career characteristics as outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate
- To provide the young men with the opportunity to learn about life experiences from men in the community

Results (Outcomes and Achievements):

As a result of this project students reported the following:

- 99% of the students rated the summit Good-Excellent
- 91% indicated summit should be repeated
- 450 of the students indicated that they use the information presented most of the time
- 350 of the students indicated that they were familiar with the content presented
- Male presenters began to visit the middle schools to provide follow up
- Schools reported a positive change in the boys' behavior

Strategies and/or Interventions:

Students participated in a variety of workshops focused on the Life and Career Characteristics as outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate; those characteristics are: Integrity, Self-direction, Global perspective, Perseverance, Work Ethic, and Interpersonal skills. Workshops were designed to focus on these skills since these are the skills that the SC State Board of Education, SC Department of Education, SC Education Oversight Committee, and the SC School Board Association have identified as the Life Skills needed for success.

Project Timeline:

A planning committee was formed made up of school district personnel and community members. The first planning meeting was held on May 9, 2016 and the committee met each

month until the date of the event. In October of 2016 it was decided that the Summit would be scheduled for February 1st and 2nd, 2017.

Special Conditions and/or Expertise Required to Carry Out the Project:

As the chairman of the planning committee I had to have excellent organizational and communication skills. I was required to handle a variety of tasks and work with a variety of persons from across the district and the community at large. It required me to be flexible and ensure that other committee members were handling the tasks assigned to them.

Outcomes Related to School Completion, Dropout Prevention, and/or Graduation Rates:

The overall goal was to provide the students with strategies on how to develop a process to achieve life and career goals which includes graduation from high school. Since these students are now in the ninth grade we will not have the data on graduation rates for another three years. However, we will examine district data in the Summer of 2018 to determine how many of the participants successfully completed ninth grade. (See Attachment B, Highlights)

Current Status of Project:

As a result of this project, several of our elementary and middle schools have had male and female summits at their sites which I assisted in planning. In addition, this school year the district held a Leadership Summit for eighth grade males and females from across the district entitled 2018 “Gateway to Excellence – Commitment to Graduate” which our committee was highlighted for sparking the idea.

Role in Project as a NDPS Certification Program Participant:

I served as the Chairman of the Planning Committee where I was responsible for managing the entire project. I selected the committee members, assigned them to sub-committees and assisted in the selection of all presenters. I managed the budget and provided updates to the Administration. I also worked closely with our office of Accountability, Assessment, and Research and Evaluation on designing the student survey, collecting the survey, and submitting a final summit report.

Lessons Learned:

I learned that our district needs to do the following:

- Offer more programs of this nature that provide our males the opportunity to feel empowered, valued and loved
- Recruit Male Mentors to assist in schools on a regular basis
- Examine instructional practices to determine what changes are needed to address specific needs of males
- Offer Professional Development that provides teachers the ability to make meaningful connections between students’ cultural background, interests, passions, and content
- Provide opportunities for families to be involved and included in all planned programs
- Provide the necessary counseling and emotional support services

Advice for Dropout Prevention Practitioners about the Project:

This is a very good program to have and requires a lot of detailed planning. You are planning a two-day conference for over 500 students. It is very rewarding to see the impact on the students faces as they walk down the sidewalk with the Male Mentors on both sides clapping for them. If you are passionate about your work like I am, it will touch your heart and soul. Be patient, be organized, and be prepared for those who may not see your vision.