



B.L.A.C.K.™

Building Lives Acquiring Cultural Knowledge™

The Office of Black Male Student Achievement has started to re-shape the mindsets of students, teachers and community members from Why? to Why Not? Our beliefs form the bases of our self-esteem. Research indicates that when students and educators have a growth mindset, they understand that intelligence can be developed. The way our black males view themselves is either empowering or limiting. We want Black Male students to believe that academic success is in their future if they are willing to commit to doing the work.

B.L.A.C.K.™ stands for Building Lives Acquiring Cultural Knowledge™.

The roots of this class come from an extensive review of best practices and research, indicating that student engagement is a critical ingredient, and it requires educator's belief, strong emphasis on relationship development, rigorous instruction, family involvement, self-identity and self-worth.

The curriculum introduces students to the complexity of the black male experience by exploring the lived reality of black men in the United States. Ranging historically-far and thematically-wide, these courses will expose students to the experience of black male labor force participation and employment outcomes; deconstruct representations of black masculinity in popular culture; explore academic dilemmas associated with primary and secondary educational pursuits; and uncover issues connected with law, incarceration, and criminal justice. In addition, part of the curriculum will examine the relationship complexities involving black men and black women by looking closely at the African-American role in traditional and non-traditional family structures. Along with historical and sociological content, these courses will address the issue of character development and black male leadership. Thus, the courses seek to address the most central of questions: Who are black men and what is the black male experience, given the growing diversity of black maleness in Minnesota, the United States and the Diaspora? At the center of the curriculum is not only what other people have said about the black male historical and contemporary experience, but also how black men have imagined and constructed their own experience over time.



Mentorship

In this case, mentorship will be approached differently, the young kings stated unequivocally that they want mentors that look like them (Black Men) and who are not just there for 1 hour per week. They want full access to a person they can connect with during out of school time. This is where the community and the need for people power come into play. We do not want Role Models we want and need Real Models™, black men from the community that our young kings can see and have full access. The young kings will also become mentors themselves to younger kings in our schools; for instance, high school students will mentor middle school students who will then mentor elementary students.

Leadership Development

Opportunities to be leaders are also very significant in the development of our young kings. It provides the young kings with hands-on experience and opens up opportunities for them to communicate, work, plan, organize, and make decisions as part of a team. Developing and promoting black males to voice and share their ideas will give them more ownership in the schools and programs they attend. There is also an advisory council for OBMSA for young kings from each school to assist in the direction of the office.

Service Learning

Unfortunately, black men are typically the recipients of services, potentially assisting in developing an inferiority complex. Our Young kings will be validated in our community by contributing through meaningful volunteer projects. Service learning projects will provide our young kings an opportunity to use and enhance life skills, engage in active learning, deepen understanding of complex social problem, and create new learning. Our young kings will have a chance to have a voice in improving others' lives while at the same time improving their own.

Unit Questions

1. Who am I?
2. Who are we?
3. What is our current state?
4. Where am I going and how do I get there?
5. Once I am there, how do I stay and advance?

21st Century Skills

1. Critical Thinking
2. Communication
3. Collaboration
4. Creativity
5. Critical Questioning (OBMSA)



OFFICE OF BLACK MALE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MONTHLY **OBMSA Extended Learning Opportunities 2017-2018**

Hello Administrators,

The Office of Black Male Student Achievement (OBMSA) will be taking the Kings on monthly field trips throughout the school year. These field trips will have an educational component as well as a teambuilding component; they are for the entire school day. Busses will start pickups at around 8:45am and dropping off at the sites around 2:45pm. Below are the dates of these monthly field trips. Once you sign the permission slip, you are giving your approval for your King to attend all trips sponsored by OBMSA throughout the 2017-2018 school year.

September 22nd	HBCU College Fair/Convention Center
October 12th	U of MN tour and movie
November 21st	Family Award Ceremony & Brunswick Bowling
December 21st	Family Building
January 18th	Career Fair/Roller Gardens
February 22nd	BLACK Teen Summit (U of MN)
March	Preparing for college tour (No Event)
April 1st – 7th	HBCU & Historical Tour (out of state)
April 26th	End-of-Year Celebration (Evening Event)
May 3rd	Magically You! Girls Summit
May 31st	Team Competition in the Park (North Commons)

Additional trips may/will be added

Field trip locations subject to change



B.L.A.C.K.™ Permission Slip Please return to course teacher.

_____ may participate in the B.L.A.C.K.™ class for 2017-2018 year.
Student Name

Please sign the permission slip below and return to the Classroom Coach. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Walker at 612-668-0161 or BlackMales@mpls.k12.mn.us for additional information.

I understand there may and will be topics discussed in this course using **Explicit lyrics of rappers, may also be a movie or video clip with a rating of R.** This will be for the benefit of the students to get an understanding of what they are seeing at movies and hearing on TV, radio, and their iPods. Our goal in this course is not only to have the Kings informed about college and career goals, but also about the images and language, they are exposed to on a daily basis.

NEW: This is a continuing permission form. It will be in force as long as your student is continuously enrolled in MPS. If you wish to cancel your permission at any time, contact your school office for the appropriate form.

Check all that apply and please sign your name below. You may choose to check one, both or neither of these boxes. Thank you for your cooperation.

I give my permission for _____ to be transported by bus to OBMSA extended learning opportunities.

Student Name

I give my permission for _____ to be filmed/photographed/interviewed by the media during school events and for the district to use my child's photograph work or voice for promotional and educational purposes. This also includes Facebook, Twitter, OBMSA website, and school yearbooks.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian: _____
Print Name Signature

Email Address: _____

Date: _____ School Site: _____