BLACK MALE SCHOLARS

2022 NSPRA Gold Medallion Award Entry
Special Communication Project / Campaign

Bowling Green Independent School District
1211 Center Street
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42104

4,100 Students in Preschool - 12th Grades
Size of Communication Department: 1

Leslie McCoy, APR
Director of Communications
270-746-2200 | leslie.mccoy@bgreen.kyschools.us
SYNOPSIS

Bowling Green, Kentucky is a growing and thriving community with more than 72,000 citizens and two public school districts. The Bowling Green Independent School District (BGISD) is the smaller of the two with approximately 4,100 students in preschool through 12th grades. BGISD has five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Students from the five elementary schools transition as sixth graders to Bowling Green Junior High, and then as 9th graders to Bowling Green High School.

BGISD has existed since the 1880s, and is known for excellence in academic programs and success in athletics. The district motto is, “Excellence Is Worth The Effort,” and schools make continual EFFORTs to improve and meet the needs of students. Each year, members of the District Leadership Team and Board of Education meet to review data, reflect on achievements, and set goals for the future. In 2020, the Board of Education approved a three-year Improvement Plan that was created by the Leadership Team, informed by schoolwide needs assessments, and established both short and long-term goals for the district.

The BGISD Improvement Plan for 2020 - 2023 includes two primary goals with progress reviewed annually:

- **CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT:** Increasing student achievement through effective alignment and delivery of the curriculum; and
- **EQUITY:** Creating and sustaining a school environment where every student has equitable access to the curriculum and experiences to be successful.

Working toward these goals, schools have been challenged to identify areas of inequity and develop school improvement plans. This includes boldly defining and affirming the distinction between equity and equality, as well as acknowledging what is working and what is not. 

*Equality is treating each student the same, regardless of need. Equity is ensuring each individual student receives what he or she needs.*

Through deeper study of achievement and transition data, leaders at Bowling Green Junior High developed a sense of urgency to create a sustainable program to engage, educate, and eliminate barriers to success for young Black men.

This is the strategic planning process of opening and recruiting the inaugural class of **BLACK MALE SCHOLARS** in Bowling Green Independent Schools.
State assessment data identifies Bowling Green Junior High as the Bowling Green Independent school with the most statistically significant achievement gaps, or academic disparities between groups of students. Middle school is when students from five elementary schools come together, therefore achievement gaps do not begin at 6th grade, but for Black/African American students, disparities continue to grow as students progress through high school. Gaps are worse as students move to post-secondary education.

- Kentucky assessment data from 2019:
  - Overall BGJHS students scored 57.8% proficiency in reading;
  - Black males scored 33.3% proficiency.
  - In math, overall students scored 50.5% proficient;
  - Black males were 18.6% proficient.

- Bowling Green High School 2020-2021 Advanced Course Enrollment:
  - 213 total Black students enrolled at BGHS;
  - 31 Black students enrolled in an English advanced course;
  - 36 Black students enrolled in an advanced math course.

- BGHS Graduation Rate:
  - 96% of all students graduate from Bowling Green High School;
  - 90% of Black students graduate from BGHS.

- Post-Secondary Data:
  - 83% of white students graduated BGHS and enrolled in a post-secondary institution;
  - 63% of Black students enrolled in a post-secondary institution.
  - Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Ky. has a 30% graduation rate for Black students;
  - South Central Kentucky Community and Technical College, Bowling Green, Ky. has a 29% graduation rate for Black students.

As part of the District Improvement Plan, school and district administrators completed a book study on *Building Equity*. At the conclusion of the study, each school was challenged to develop equity teams or committees. For Bowling Green Junior High, the Equity Committee was established to provide direction as the school worked to become more equitable and inclusive through policies, practices, and programs.

In reviewing data and programming, it was clear that more needed to be done to support African American males. The next step was for district and school leaders to learn more about two Kentucky academies developed for young Black men in Kentucky’s largest cities: the Carter G. Woodson Academy, which opened in 2012, and the W.E.B. DuBois Academy which opened in 2018.

BGJHS Principals contacted Roszalyn Adkins, who was an integral part of founding both academies, leading Carter G. Woodson Academy as the Dean of Students, and also serving as co-chair of the Lexington Commission for Racial Justice and Equity.

Ms. Akins met virtually with school and district leaders in Bowling Green to describe the process and goals for opening the two academies, as well as to share their successes. She helped BGISD brainstorm similar opportunities for students within a smaller, cohort model instead of a stand-alone academy. For BGJHS, with approximately 930 total students and 21.2% African American, a separate academy was not feasible.

“Middle school is a time when we must foster students’ understanding of how the quality of the school experience sets the stage for high school and beyond.”

(Building Equity, p. 80)
The idea evolved to a program for a targeted group of students, without the need to hire additional teachers, or need for separate physical facilities. Utilizing flexibility within the school’s schedule would make this program sustainable, replicable for future grades within the school, as well as by other schools.

It was determined that academic support goals could be met at Bowling Green Junior High if one course in each content area was taught to a cohort of Black male students. These courses, taught with an emphasis on African American history and culture, would encourage students to see and learn about people who look like them. Plus, similar to the other academies in Kentucky, these students would have opportunities for ongoing mentoring, intentional support for social-emotional well-being, and belonging with time dedicated during the schoolwide WIN (What I Need) period. As part of BGJHS, students would continue to interact and engage daily with grade-level peers during elective courses such as band, choir, orchestra, physical education, art, and more. Students would also be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities such as clubs and athletics at BGJHS.

The Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. DuBois Academies both began with one, inaugural class or grade level of students, then grew to expand, by enrollment, as well as expanded community partnerships. Successes of the two are determined by state assessment results, enrollment and completion of advanced coursework, as well as successful transition rates to college or to career/military in future years.

Bowling Green Junior High, with a tight but intentional timeline, set out to create programming for young Black men, starting with the incoming class of 6th grade students in August 2021.

**Carter G. Woodson Academy**
Fayette County Public Schools
Opened in 2012
- 100% Graduation Rate
- 100% Successful Transition Rate
  - 75% post-secondary education
  - 25% military / career
- 2018: All 8th graders scored proficient or distinguished on KPREP
- 54 Boys in National Beta Club

**W. E. B. DuBois Academy**
Jefferson County Public Schools
Opened in 2018 (6th Grade)
- 1st Year: 235 applications for 150 seats
- 2nd Year: 371 applications
- 3rd Year: 577 applications

**SAMPLE COHORT SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Period</td>
<td>ENGLISH: Black Male Scholars</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Period</td>
<td>MATH: Black Male Scholars</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Period</td>
<td>BGJHS ELECTIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th Period</td>
<td>BGJHS ELECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Period</td>
<td>SOCIAL STUDIES: Black Male Scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Period</td>
<td>SCIENCE: Black Male Scholars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schoolwide WIN Period (What I Need)</td>
<td>Black Male Scholars</td>
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**2020-21 BGISD 5TH GRADE**
Enrollment of Black/African American Males

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T. C. Cherry Elementary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishman McGinnis Elementary</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parker-Bennett-Curry Elementary</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter Gray Elementary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. R. McNeill Elementary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Academy</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
OVERALL GOAL: Develop the Black Male Scholars Program for 20 incoming 6th graders to begin in August 2021.

OBJECTIVES:
• BEHAVIOR: The BGJHS School Based Decision Making Council (SBDM) to approve the addition of programming for young Black men and core content courses by March 1, 2021.
• BEHAVIOR: Four teachers (core content 6th grade) commit to teaching one class with emphasis on African American history and culture by April 1, 2021.
• BEHAVIOR: At least 30 5th grade boys complete an application for the Black Male Scholars Program by May 7, 2021.
• ATTITUDE / OPINION: Faculty and staff of BGJHS recognize the need, support the program, and have a positive attitude by April 1, 2021.
• ATTITUDE / OPINION: Obtain support to move forward from the Board of Education at the District’s Planning Session on April 19, 2021.

KEY MESSAGES:
• OPPORTUNITY: Engage, educate, and eliminate barriers for young Black men.
• OPPORTUNITY: The school plans to grow and expand the program to grades 6-8 by 2023-2024.
• EDUCATION: Core courses will be taught through the lens of African American History and Culture, plus continue to model the district’s expectation and motto: Excellence Is Worth The Effort.

TIMELINE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JANUARY / FEBRUARY</th>
<th>MARCH</th>
<th>APRIL</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUNE/JULY</th>
<th>AUGUST</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BGJHS Equity</td>
<td>Present plan to the School Decision Making Council for approval of Black Male Scholars beginning with 6th grade for 2021-22.</td>
<td>Presentation to Board of Education</td>
<td>Scholar Applications Due</td>
<td>BGJH Staff Professional Development from Gurian Institute</td>
<td>Welcome 6th Grade Scholars to Bowling Green Junior High.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Meetings</td>
<td>Present Black Male Scholars plan to grade level teams at BGJHS.</td>
<td>Create and distribute flyers and invitations to Info Night to eligible students</td>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
<td>Hire BMS Program Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect with Roszalyn Adkins</td>
<td>Design logo / branding</td>
<td>Host Informational Event with Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Selections Finalized</td>
<td>Deliver Lawn Signs to Scholar homes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss achievement data and ideas with 6th grade teachers.</td>
<td>Four 6th grade teachers commit to program.</td>
<td>Send letters and make personal calls to eligible students</td>
<td>Deliver acceptance letters and logo t-shirts to Inaugural Class of Scholars in their elementary schools</td>
<td>Host Induction &amp; Orientation for Scholars and Families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop program ideas and timeline</td>
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<td>Press Releases/Social Media</td>
<td>Use website and social media to publicize Inaugural Class</td>
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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robert Lightning, BGJHS Principal</th>
<th>Darlene Porter, Assistant Principal</th>
<th>BGJHS Equity Committee</th>
<th>Leslie McCoy, APR Communications</th>
<th>Gambia Flemister, Coordinator (Hired Summer 2021)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Leader</td>
<td>School Achievement Data Analyst</td>
<td>Overall program advisors</td>
<td>Strategic advisor for Public Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher expectations, and evaluations</td>
<td>6th Grade Principal</td>
<td>Development of the Scholar Application and Criteria for Selection of Scholars</td>
<td>Branding</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Wide Professional Development</td>
<td>6th Grade Student and Family Contact</td>
<td>Advisors for student mentoring and social-emotional supports</td>
<td>Photography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Male Scholars Spokesperson</td>
<td>Community Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
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<td>BGISD Social Media</td>
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<td>Media Relations</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>District Website Management</td>
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BUDGET:
Primary audiences were internal to the school district, therefore minimal funding was used to launch the program and recruit students. All public awareness was organic; no funds were used for advertising, or to boost social media posts.

The district invested $2,500 in branding materials for the inaugural class of Black Male Scholars. Utilizing community partnerships with price discounts, the district and school purchased shirts for the Scholars, their families, and educators; lawn signs to announce the class, lapel pins for Induction night, and back-to-school swag such as backpacks, lanyards, and water bottles.

BGJHS hired Gambia Flemister in July 2021, to serve as both a Spanish teacher and Black Male Scholars Program Coordinator. Salary and benefits for the extra-duty coordinator position and extended summer contract days totals $9,855. The Board of Education designated Title I funding for this position.

BRANDING:
Kentucky’s first two academies for young Black men are named after historical Black leaders, Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois. Instead of designating a namesake, Bowling Green Junior High and its Equity Committee, decided to be specific. The program is intended to eliminate barriers to success for Black males, therefore it is named Black Male Scholars. The district and the school unapologetically define within its name, the purpose and the intent.

The Logo:
The district researched logos of Historical Black Colleges and Universities and chose a version of the logo with similarities to Morehouse College. It has a simple graphic of a graduation cap, surrounded by a purple circle and the name circling around the image. Purple is the official color of the school district, and the purple circle represents the belonging within and support provided by the school and district.
IMPLEMENTATION

The first communication tactics were to gain approval of the programming, and build support internally. This included presentations to the School Based Decision Making Council and grade level Learning Communities. Using research, data, and schoolwide professional development, the school defined “the why” for Black Male Scholars.

Next, BGJHS identified four 6th grade teachers to teach one class of Black Male Scholars for the 2021-2022 school year. Teachers met with school principals and connected with mentors from Carter G. Woodson Academy before committing to teaching in the Black Male Scholars Program.

Following the presentation to the Board of Education on April 19th, and with their support, the next tactics focused on students and community awareness.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT:
Elementary principals and counselors helped identify eligible 5th grade students and shared Black Male Scholars informational handouts.

An Info Night event was held at BGJHS on April 27, 2021, for interested families to learn more and ask questions. After the event, BGJHS principals made phone calls and prepared application packets for eligible students who did not attend to offer more information and encouragement.

Students completed applications, returning them to their elementary school counselors. Next, with assistance from the Equity Committee, BGJHS conducted interviews to meet the students and get to know them personally.

After Scholars were selected, BGJHS Principals and BGISD Superintendent Gary Fields visited elementary schools to hand-deliver acceptance letters and Black Male Scholar tshirts. Families of the Scholars were also invited to attend in support of their young men. Family members were also given shirts that said “Raising a Black Male Scholar.”

COMMUNITY AWARENESS:
The district website and district social media were used to share details about Black Male Scholars and the application process.

A press release was sent to local media coinciding with flyers going home with students. Local media outlets were also invited to attend the Info Night on April 27th.

After the students were selected, the district website and social media were used to introduce the Inaugural Class of Scholars.

On July 16, teachers and principals used the district’s custom purple school bus to deliver lawn signs to each Scholars home. The bright yellow lawn or window signs included the Black Male Scholars logo and “LIVES HERE.”

The district used social media to continue to build awareness and community support for the program, including photos from the delivery of lawn signs, and the Induction Ceremony attended by Scholars and their families.
After approval by the School-Based Decision Making Council, Principal Robert Lightning received several emails from faculty and staff showing appreciation for the initiative. Overall, the faculty seemed to have a “finally doing something” attitude.

**FOUR teachers committed** to teaching a 6th grade content class with an emphasis on African American history and culture. Some were concerned as white females, that they were not the best fit. However, they were supportive and willing to learn with mentoring from other teachers.

The Board of Education supported the development of the Black Male Scholars Program beginning in April 2021, then at the June 2021 Board Meeting, the Board **approved funding** to create a part-time coordinator position to lead the program and perform day-to-day tasks associated with it. No negative comments were shared at Board meetings nor social media. There were questions as to why the district was not offering the program to girls, too. The response was the key message, that the program is built to grow.

16 students and family members and the Bowling Green Daily News attended the Info Night on April 27th.

29 applications were received by the May deadline. **20 SCHOLARS were selected.**

**Traditional Media | Community Awareness:**
Bowling Green Daily News: Print & Digital Newspaper
- [BGISD will launch program centering on Black scholars](#), April 20, 2021
- [City schools’ Black Male Scholars program now accepting applications](#), April 28, 2021
- [BGJHS’ Black Male Scholars program gears up](#), July 19, 2021
- [Black Male Scholars kicks off with Lost River Cave adventure](#), July 29, 2021

Local Television:
- [WBKO: Bowling Green Junior High launches Black Male Scholars program](#), April 21, 2021
- [WNKY: Bowling Green Junior High Announces Black Male Scholars Program](#), April 21, 2021

After learning about Black Male Scholars through various media, a local attorney made an anonymous **$25,000 donation** in May 2021, to support the programming of Black Male Scholars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>INSTAGRAM</th>
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</table>
| **Intro Post: April 20, 2021**
  8,601 People Reached
  1,540 Engagements | **Info Night Event Reminder:**
  7,344 Impressions
  99 Engagements | **Welcome Inaugural Class:**
  961 People Reached
  161 Likes |
| **Welcome Inaugural Class: May 19**
  4,684 people reached
  686 Engagements | **Acceptance letter delivery and link to web article:**
  10,173 Impressions
  756 Engagements | **Induction Ceremony:**
  803 Reached
  96 Likes |
| **Lawn Sign Delivery: July 16**
  13,008 people reached
  3,613 Post Engagements | **Induction Ceremony Photos:**
  36,320 Impressions
  804 Engagements | |
SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

BOWLING GREEN JUNIOR HIGH EQUITY COMMITTEE, Spring 2021:
PRINCIPAL: Robert Lightning

PRINCIPAL: Darlene Porter, 6th Grade Principal

TEACHER: Megan Braman

PARENT: John C. Lee (also a local pastor and member of the School Based Decision Making Council)

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Dr. Martha Sales, WKU Interim Dean of Students, Executive Director of WKU TRIO Programs and Intercultural Student Engagement Center

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Destiny O'Rourke, BGHS College and Career Counselor

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Calvin Head, Teacher, BGHS Freshman Academy

DISTRICT CONTACT: Gary Fields, Superintendent

DISTRICT CONTACT: Elisa Beth Brown, Director of Instructional Programs

DISTRICT CONTACT: Leslie McCoy, Director of Communications

REFERENCES:

BGISD District Improvement Plan 2020-2023: Curriculum Alignment & Equity

Districtwide Book Study

Harvard article with challenges referenced in presentation: Educating Black Boys

HOW TO GET A PROGRAM LIKE CGWA TO BECOME A PART OF YOUR DISTRICT!
From the First Meeting/Presentation By Roszalyn Adkins

1. Must have the support of the superintendent, school board, community like the faith-based community, the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations.
2. Must show that there is a need in your community for a program for boys. The K-Prep data should make it clear.
3. Your program must reflect the students in your district. (No cherry picking) Free and reduced lunch, special education, average students and gifted students.
4. You can have an application process.

Carter G. Woodson Academy, Lexington, Kentucky

W.E.B. DuBois Academy, Louisville, Kentucky
The BLACK MALE SCHOLARS PROGRAM will engage, educate, and eliminate barriers to achieve excellence that lies within every Black male.

ABOUT THE BLACK MALE SCHOLARS PROGRAM:
The Black Male Scholars Program is an opportunity for young men to achieve success in a supportive setting, which requires a higher and intentional level of support and the availability of a greater array of resources. Beginning in late April 2021, Bowling Green Junior High will invite Black male students to apply to the 6th Grade Scholars Program.

6th Grade Scholars will begin in the fall of 2021 with 25 Black / African American male students selected to the Inaugural Class. BGYHS plans to grow the Black Male Scholars Program to grades 6-8th grade to serve between 60-80 students.

GOALS:
- Curriculum and Content taught through the lens of African American history and culture.
- Social-Emotional Excellence with social/emotional group sessions and transition/career interest activities.
- Belonging: mentoring, and caregiver support programs.

EXPECTATIONS: Excellence Is Worth The Effort
Excellent Manners - Scholars will use manners when interacting with staff, scholars, families & guests;
Excellent Attire - Scholars will be in appropriate dress code attire each day;
Excellent Communication- Scholars will speak and write fluently with confidence and composure;
Excellent Worldview- Scholars will participate in cultural events, and field trips which lead to …
SCHOLARS being prepared for EXCELLENCE in their future career and life!

SAMPLE SCHEDULE:

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<tr>
<td>6th PERIOD</td>
<td>SCIENCE: Black Male Scholars</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Black Male Scholars</td>
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6th Grade Scholars will complete 6th grade English, math, social studies and science as a cohort, with curriculum taught through the lens of African American history and culture. Students will participate in various related arts and extracurricular activities with peers offered at Bowling Green Junior High.
May 19, 2021

NAME
SCHOOL

Dear NAME:

Congratulations and welcome to the Inaugural Class of Black Male Scholars at Bowling Green Junior High! You are one of 20 young men selected to begin this exciting initiative next year. We look forward to working with you as YOU achieve excellence and develop as a leader.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, you will take English, math, science and social studies as a cohort of Black Male Scholars. You will also have a WIN, or “What I Need” period each day that will include opportunities for mentoring, guest speakers, and other career-interest or leadership activities. You will also have the opportunity to take elective courses with other peers at BGJHS and you are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, such as clubs or sports offered at Bowling Green Junior High.

As a Black Male Scholar, you will be expected to use excellent manners, be in excellent attire and appropriate dress code each day, have excellent communication skills, speaking and writing with confidence and composure, and have an excellent world view. As Scholars, YOU will be prepared for excellence in your future career and life.

Again, we congratulate you on your acceptance to this new leadership program at Bowling Green Junior High. We look forward to getting to know you more!

Sincerely,

Robert Lightning,  Darlene Porter,
BGJHS Principal  6th Grade Principal
Shirts for Scholars presented with acceptance letters.

Shirts for Parents & Caregivers presented with acceptance letters.
“I got a bit emotional when this was presented at our admin meeting. I know what the skeptics are saying, the complaints of who’s left out, and I get that some people don’t have the same understanding or excitement that I do. I’m fearful that the number may be far greater against than in support. So this is why I had to hold back my emotions. Despite any of the naysayers, our district approved this monumental move in the right direction! It’s a promise kept and a statement of Positive Actions!!! Basically saying, so what!!! I again greatly appreciate the nerves of my district to make such a move.

From an administrator that has remained silent on so many inequities because of the fear of the masses, the fear of being Black Balled (it happens), the fear of being labeled, the fear of losing my career, and any other fears, I send a Big Emotional Thanks!!! Actions Speak Louder Than Words.”

Delagus Jackson, Principal of Parker-Bennett-Curry Elementary, BGISD
Since August 2021:

SCHOLARS WEEKLY PROGRAMMING:
• Schoolwide Mindful Mondays
• Career Launch Fridays; partnership with the Boys and Girls Club
• Grade Checks and Celebrations
• Support from WKU Social Work Intern

MONTHLY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:
• Scholars meet with mentors from Why Knot Us: an initiative including Black male college students from the WKU Intercultural Student Engagement Center;
• Parent Cafes with Family Thrive Coordinator, Jessica Stunson, a Clinical Social Work/Therapist, LCSW (Individual sessions for students and parents as needed)
  • The Family Thrive Coordinator position is paid from a grant with the school’s Youth Services Center.

The first field trip for the Black Male Scholars was to the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, to see the N2020 Community Reflections exhibit with guest curator Woke3. The students toured the exhibit with the artist and then went to lunch at Slim and Husky’s- the first Black-owned business on Broadway in Nashville. The students were surprised during lunch with a visit by one of the restaurant’s co-founders and Vice President, Clint Gray.

Community-based field trips 2021-22:
• Team-building at Lost River Cave;
• Science lessons with WKU Professors at Shanty Hollow Lake;
• Math / economics connections at Jackson’s Orchard;
• Western Kentucky University Athletics hosted the Scholars for a Hilltopper football game, including tours of facilities and the opportunity to meet professionals working in athletics, but are not athletes. Students heard from WKU Athletic Marketing, Physical Trainers, and Head Coach Tyson Helton on game day.

Each week, different Black faculty and staff members have visited Black Male Scholars to introduce themselves and share about their educational journey to working in the schools.

State Representative Patti Minter visited and spoke to the Black Male Scholars in October. She invited Scholars to be her guests during the 2022 Kentucky Legislative Session.

Scholars are learning about their own ancestry, from African Ancestry DNA tests and a semester-long research project to culminate in the spring of 2022. Program Coordinator Gambia Flemister says, “It is essential to Scholars to know their heritage to pave a road that continues their greatness. Some are only privy to one or two generations, but they gain a greater understanding of themselves when they are able to trace back to ancestors beyond slavery.”

BGISD is working with the Kentucky Department of Education’s Division of Communications to share a feature on the Black Male Scholars Program in the statewide publication, Kentucky Teacher.

The Bowling Green/Warren County Trailblazers selected the Black Male Scholars as “Trailblazers in the Making,” and recognized the program at a community awards ceremony on February 27th, 2022.

- Video about Black Male Scholars submitted for Trailblazers Program

On February 14, 2022, Bowling Green Junior High announced the Black Male Scholars Program will expand from 20 to 50 students, including 6th and 7th grades for the 2022-23 school year.