



STATESMEN
COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY FOR BOYS
Build Strong Boys

Literacy Boost Initiative

Statesmen Title I Schoolwide Program Plan
Initial Plan

**Statesmen College Preparatory Academy for Boys,
A DC Public Charter School**
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What We Learned

Physical
Distance,
not
Social
Distance



STATESMEN
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RELATIONSHIPS

*"I am my
brother's
keeper."*



Introduction

2020 will go down in history for our school, our community, the city and the nation. It is true and fortunate that we have not all been exposed to the Coronavirus. Still, we have certainly all been exposed by it. While Year Two is notoriously difficult for any new school startup, this was exacerbated for Statesmen College Preparatory Academy for Boys PCS in light of the Coronavirus pandemic with the perverse mental and emotional trauma that our families experienced as racial unrest focused our attention on challenges to the intrinsic value black male existence. Add to that the fact that we more than doubled our students and staff as well as moved into a new building. In all of this, we never lost our focus on the boys that we serve and completed a banner year in service to scholars.

Where we can be measured, the news is relatively good. We met and exceeded scholar enrollment (130 scholars enrolled), far surpassed our goals for reenrollment (95% of current scholars reenrolled for another year), had one of the lowest suspension rate for black and brown boys in DC (just over 3% suspension, down from 5% last year), maintained high scholar attendance (95% in-seat attendance) and maintained extremely high satisfaction for families as parents continue to report that they are happy with the school and scholars as they are in the top quartile in connectedness to their teachers. Additionally, even in these trying times and with a schedule 3 and 4 times the intensity of their peers, our teachers continue to report extreme satisfaction with the school, its mission, our work and the leadership and maintained 99% attendance for the year. While standardized testing is not in place, our early indications are that our scholars will show modest growth in Reading and mildly mitigated losses in Math. That is up against what will most definitely be record declines in growth for black and brown boys across the nation. We are enormously proud of the fact that our Students with Disabilities are still showing growth at or even above the general education students in some areas. More than half our returning student - all students with disabilities, at-risk students and struggling learners - participated in a 5-week comprehensive summer school program, the National Summer School Initiative with over 12,000 students nationally.

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT

Life as we know it has radically changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and we recognize how hard this has been for our families, friends, supporters and the communities we serve. The boys are adapting in these times of uncertainty and we are ensuring that academic and personal growth continues.

As many of you know, the model for Statesmen centers around four key values: ***Relationships, Rigor, Relevance*** and ***Resilience***. Through this, relationships have proven to be the foundation upon which the success of our distance learning program is built. **From the first week of school closure, 100% of our boys had a school-provided Chromebook, a school email account and the necessary internet services.** We have maintained 100% engagement

of parents, 98% engagement of students and upwards of 95% daily in-seat attendance through the COVID-19 school closure last spring.

While we will again close our doors to physical programming until the pandemic subsides, our primary value of *Relationships* means that we cannot engage in “social” distancing. For Statesmen Academy, we will stick close together while engaging physical distance.

Needs Assessment

That said, we engaged a systematic effort involving multiple stakeholders to acquire an accurate and thorough picture of strengths and weaknesses of Statesmen as a community, thus identifying student needs through a variety of information-gathering techniques.

Assessment Team

The team involved in the assessment was wide and varied, and consisted of the following members:

- Shawn Hardnett – CEO
- Rictor Craig – Principal
- Nicole Mayes – Director of Student Life
- Amanda Bloom – Dean of Instruction
- Michelle Pianim – Special Education Coordinator
- Patrick Shaw – Math Specialist
- Dejon Tucker – Reading Specialist
- Gregory Williams – Special Education Teacher
- Lamar Bethea – Founding Kings 101 Teacher
- Tony Traynham – Instructional Aide
- Nicole Solomon-Mitchell – Board Chair
- Alicia Adams – Board Member, Committee Chair
- Satira Streeter – Parent Board Member
- Ray McKenzie – Former Parent, Current Board Member
- Natalie Wimberly – Parent, PAC Lead
- Kay Hogan – Parent
- Kiye Corbit – Student
- Harley Mitchell – Student
- Diontae Graham – Student
- Kelly Price – Student
- Cyheem Ware – Student

The School Leadership Team, including 5 teachers, led the needs assessment. The entire Academic and Program Excellence Committee of the Board was involved, along with the Parent Association and a small group of 5 founding students. Student focus groups were regularly convened and polled. On several occasions, the entire school community was polled through school-generated surveys.

Academic Data

Several forms of academic and non-academic data were used to inform the schoolwide program that we initiated and the plan to implement:

Academic Data:

- PARCC Results
- NWEA MAP
- Reading Plus
- Curriculum Assessments
- Student Grades

Non-Academic SEL Data:

- Panorama School Health Survey
- TNTP Teacher Survey
- Internal Satisfaction Surveys (student, parent, teacher)
- Attendance and Re-enrollment
- Discipline and Suspension

These data are a part of a regular data dashboard that is analyzed and updated across the year.

Equity

The participation in the needs assessment is analyzed against the demographics of the schools. While we are all black and brown boys, there is enormous diversity within this group and we have represented it within the team working on the needs assessment and in the data used for review. The data is broken across the subgroups that exist within the student population so that we designed a project that would benefit all students while specifically addressing the identified area of development. Additionally, the student focus groups included and includes some focus groups that are heterogeneous as well as groups homogeneous to the subgroups that exist in the building.

Assessment Findings

We engaged a comprehensive needs assessment and program examination that included a review of all of the data that is described above. The entire staff of the schools was involved, the PAC (parent association) the entire board and the students. There were no less than 5 focus groups with parents, 10 with students, innumerable staff focus groups, 5 instructional walkthroughs attended by Board and parents together, one instructional

walkthrough with just parents, and instructional walkthrough by 3 program partners. EmpowerK12 worked with the school to design a data dashboard that captured and graphically presented many of the findings.

The strengths of the school are many. The signature strength is school culture as it is experienced through bonded relationships. Students, teachers and parents report a connectedness to the school community that is extremely high. That is at the base of the data that this plan opens with.

Students feel deeply known and unconditionally loved, that they are held to high expectations, that they are safe, affirmed and supported in a rigorous learning environment where they still have fun. They have the highest ranking for “connectedness” to the adults that preside over them in a national cohort of high performing schools.

Teachers are well-resourced, have ample time to plan and attend to their duties, are supported by knowledgeable and helpful leaders who improve their practice and feel that the school is a safe, supportive and yet academically rigorous environment for students.

Parents are impressed with the warm and caring environment, the physical appearance and upkeep of the school and open and transparent communication that the school maintains. They feel that their children are safe, that they are learning and that they are surrounded by people that deeply care about them and are committed to their achievement.

Even in the face of COVID-19 school closure, the students had some growth in both ELA and Math, were able to maintain record attendance through a full day synchronous virtual school program and report extremely high levels of satisfaction and engagement. Statesmen was and has continued to be a vibrant and connected community. That said, with the impact of COVID, just under 40% of our students made expected growth in ELA, approaching only half of what that rate was last year. For Math, it was just under 20% that made expected growth, down from 85% in the year before. In analyzing this and other data examined as a part of the needs assessment, a counterintuitive impact was revealed. While Math took the bigger hit, literacy was a critical need for the entire student body of Statesmen, especially critical for Students with Disabilities, At-Risk students, Struggling Learners and Economically Disadvantaged students – with the At-Risk population bearing the brunt of the losses. As well, it was an opportunity for all of these groups and our higher performers. Our students showed significant response to interventions that were rigorous and relational. While there was growth, Literacy was also a place where there is significant ground to make. Additionally, student grew in Math, but that growth was stagnant where computation and fluencies moved to critical thinking and application. Where students could read and extrapolate deep meaning, they were better able to approach the task, select the correct mathematical operations and accurately compute to approximate the right response. Where students were less able to read with fluency, accuracy, deep comprehension and to extrapolate meaning, they picked the wrong operation and failed the task.

Schoolwide Program Planning Team

Team Composition

The team composition is a subset of the group that participated in the needs assessment. Largely, everyone involved at that level has had input on the final structure of the plan, with a few additions. Schoolwide Plan Design Team consists of the following:

- Shawn Hardnett – CEO
- Rictor Craig – Principal
- Nicole Mayes – Director of Student Life
- Amanda Bloom – Dean of Instruction
- Michelle Pianim – Special Education Coordinator
- Patrick Shaw – Math Specialist
- Dejon Tucker – Reading Specialist
- Gregory Williams – Special Education Teacher
- Lamar Bethea – Founding Kings 101 Teacher
- Tony Traynham – Instructional Aide
- Miosha Dangerfield – Instructional Aide
- Melvin Smith – Behavioral Tech/IA
- Nicole Solomon-Mitchell – Board Chair
- Alicia Adam – Board Member, Committee Chair
- Satira Streeter – Parent Board Member
- Ray McKenzie – Former Parent, Current Board Member
- Natalie Wimberly – Parent, PAC Lead
- Kay Hogan – Parent
- Kiye Corbit – Student
- Harley Mitchell – Student
- Diontae Graham – Student
- Kelly Price – Student
- Cyheem Ware – Student
- Partners:
 - Khari Shabazz, (Lavinia Group Specialist)
 - Candido Brown (School Program and School Culture Specialist)
 - Vernon Riley (Relay GSE Teacher and Leader Development Specialist)

Plan Development and Communication

The Schoolwide Program developed over a period of weeks and months as the needs assessment data was being collected and analyzed. It was immediately apparent that Literacy was going to need to be a key focus area. The more data and observation that

took place, the clearer it became how we might focus the plan. The Leadership Team led the planning and had a standing meeting each week for the first six months of the year where the plan was conceptualized. The Academics Committee met monthly and conducted several walkthroughs and gave feedback that was incorporated into the plan. The parent association, with the 2 parent members of our Board were the primary vehicle through which parents were engaged in the process. PAC met monthly, conducted a walkthrough and had elements of the plan tested with them. We hosted monthly Chat-n-Chew breakfasts as a way to engage parents who did not choose to participate in PAC, but wanted to be aware of school events. We used these meetings to share about the plan, field test program elements so parents understood what students were experiencing and get feedback on the plan as it developed. PAC was essential in developing text and chat groups that regularly communicated with parents that did not engage or did not receive the written updates or did not respond to electronic communication from the school. Portions of weekly PDs for staff were used to design, get feedback and test elements of the plan. ELA and Kings 101 classes and small groups of students were engaged in plan elements and testing. The agenda items included the program components that we were surmising Townhalls and community meetings were used as opportunities to update the entire community on the almost constant element piloting that was going on. Because of the high use of field-testing, all stakeholders were able to immediately see how input was being regularly sought, but also incorporated into the plan – shifting to a program that would not impact the content of the Kings 101 class, incorporating many additional small group opportunities, completely re-shifting how IAs were being used to support instruction of the ELA block where the Lavinia model was being used, using the Reading Plus program as the actual homework assignment, modeling session specifically for parents, shifting the length of each block, breaking the sessions up into specific groupings and mirroring the structures of writing in the Math class. The final plan also represented great expense to the school and had to undergo standard approvals – school leadership, the Finance Committee of the Board and standard PCSB and OSSE procurement processes.

Schoolwide Planning: Literacy Boost

Strategy Rationale

Specific to the needs of the identified subgroups (at-risk students, economically disadvantaged students, students from minority racial and ethnic groups and students with disabilities), Statesmen has adopted schoolwide program initiative designed to specifically increase the opportunities for these subgroups to meet rigorous state academic standards while generally increasing the access of all learners to rigorous academics. The focus will be directed at literacy development and support, leveraging the SEL impacted school environment for academic gains in literacy for all student, particularly those students who belong to a specific subgroup - at-risk students, struggling learners, African American males, economically disadvantaged scholars, homeless students and students with disabilities.

1. We have engaged a partnership with the Lavinia Group to provide:

- off-site induction, training and materials provision related to the implementation of a highly rigorous CCSS grade level pedagogy for deeply engaging all students, regardless of background or ability, in grade level text,
 - off-site induction, training and materials provision related to the implementation of a highly personalized reading intervention designed to guarantee that students are deeply engaging independent reading texts that are matched to their independent reading levels and interests
 - on-site embedded co-planning, co-observation, coaching, and practice of the pedagogy and programs to guarantee execution with fidelity
2. We have engaged a partnership with Reading Plus to provide:
- highly personalized online intervention strategies to support reading mechanics, fluency and grade level vocabulary development.
3. We have incorporated a Reading Specialist role (Dejon Tucker) into the Leadership Team structure to provide:
- Program leadership and oversight to the Literacy Boost initiative
 - Liaison service for the Lavinia Group and Statesmen partnership
 - order and manage the Lavinia materials
 - build and establish a library system for independent reading level book trade
 - serve as the liaison for Guided Reading
 - order and host all materials related to Guided Reading
 - Liaison service for Reading Plus and Statesmen partnership
 - manage the access and usage of the online platform for Reading Plus
 - assess the reading levels of all students
 - create skill- based literacy groups
 - assign and support the administration of these groups
 - pull and initially analyze assessment data as well as serve on the leadership team in supporting the execution of the program across the school
4. We have engaged a partnership with City Year DC to provide:
- Relational support to students engaged in Literacy Boost initiative
 - Academic support to teachers in providing small group instruction and one to one literacy support

This rigorous curriculum, our relational focus, earned autonomy, gender differentiated instructional pedagogy, acute intervention strategy, personalized learning and data driven

instructional approaches all accomplish many of the classical interventions of several of the most commonly diagnosed disabilities. Every day, students attend a school where it is built in that they will participate in small group learning environments informed by formative assessments and receive content and instruction tailored to their needs within those groups or through personalized learning modules. Both their need for deep relational connections to the peers and teachers as well as their need for individualized and specific remediation and development of discreet skills is attended to. Our field-testing has demonstrated again and again that this comprehensive approach coupled with the Crew centered PBIS program that focuses on identity affirmation and effort/growth celebration has largely mitigated the stigma that often leads to behavioral problems that manifest as resistance to treatment that is largely based on a need to not appear “dumb” or in need of assistance in the face of immediate ridicule.

No less than 20 full days of on-site embedded modeling, co-planning, co-teaching, observation and feedback were provided for all teachers – those directly engaged in Literacy Boost and those who were not; including Instructional Assistants, Dedicated Aides and Behavioral Technicians. Monthly data sessions were modeled with by the specialist with the Leadership Team and then executed with staff. These data examinations were designed to identify and address students who continued to progress toward proficiency in a timely manner. Staff were able to immediately offer adjustments to the program (some listed above) and begin testing new strategies right away. The strategies were directly aligned to many of the accommodations, modification, and adaptations called for in the IEP and 504 plans of our students.

Parent Involvement

As is explained above, parents were and are intricately involved in the planning, review, and evaluation of the schoolwide program. Their feedback is collected by the means established within this plan and much of their feedback informed the progression of the program as it was piloted. 100% of the parents involved in the planning, needs assessment and open presentation of the program agree the methodology and to implementation of the initiative has been successful. In particular, several parents of our higher performing students initially complained that the stories being used for the program lacked relevance, but particularly rigor. We offered a series of program demonstrations led by the leadership and teachers of the schools so that parents could experience the rigor of the execution. In two sessions, most parents were unable to identify the rigor concepts without support and in one session no parents were. The experience of what students were required to do with the readings rather than a cursory review of the reading completely shifted the parent point of view and led to their feedback that sessions with students needed to be chucked differently.

We use newsletters, flyers, PAC group texts, emails, and weekly Townhalls, Parent Teacher Conferences, Back2School Night and occasional assemblies to inform parents of our Title I status, our decision to consolidate title funds and invite and engage them in academic process. We also conduct specific trainings for parents throughout the year – Technology Night, Take the Assessments, Homebased Homework Hotline, etc. as a way to support parents with this initiative. The most effective support to the entire school improvement

plan is institution of North Star Advisories. Each student is placed into a small pod for the entire year that is led by one staff member. Part of their responsibility is to build a relationship with the parent of each child in their pod, serve as the first line of communication, serve as advocate for the child and the family, procure and deliver if necessary, all supports and speak with the parent twice a week minimally. We have always worked to make sure that each child has two or three adults that they feel immediately connected to. We have now tentatively accomplished that for parents as well. This has dramatically increased parent interest and engagement in this initiative, the entire improvement plan and the school as a whole. Additionally, parents now receive individual student academic assessment results (NWEA MAP, PARCC, internal assessment and survey result), grades and assignment updates from the North Star Advisor (NSA). The NSA serves as a primary interpreter of the data and encourage parents to participate in the bi-weekly townhalls, parent meeting and other such activities designed to make sure that parents understand these documents.

Professional Development

All Leaders and teachers at Statesmen College Preparatory Academy for Boys will receive extensive and ongoing professional development. While teachers will still have the primary responsibility of designing rigorous and engaging lesson and attending to the myriad of tasks associated with that, if we are to offer a comprehensive program designed to reconstruct the educational experience of Black and Latino males, much of the day of a teacher at Statesmen will have to be different.

At Statesmen, leaders and teachers will need to be skilled at the following:

- Operationalizing the many aspects of authentic relationship building in their classrooms (Warm Starts, Boy Connected, Crew Systems, Restorative Justice Practices)
- Operationalizing the many elements of high expectation, high structure, high support and high recognition in their classrooms (First Days of School, Teach Like a Champion, No Nonsense Nurturing, College Culture)
- Operationalizing the cultural and instructional implications of The Statesmen Way in their classrooms (The Divine Nine Instructional Implications, Boys Activated, Warm Starts, Boys Connected)
- Operationalizing the PBIS and discipline program in their classrooms (Merits/Demerits, Crew Systems, Restorative Justice Practices)
- Operationalizing the comprehensive instructional program (Common Core State Standards, Kings 101 Curriculum, Personalized Learning, Acute Intervention Strategy)
- Operationalizing the school program for outcomes for all learners (Students With Disabilities, English Language Learners and Students with Academic Deficits)

A comprehensive report from The New Teacher Project (TNT) outlined the expensive and unimpressive impact of traditional PD models. "The Mirage" illustrated the reality that both low and high performing teachers made limited improvements to their practice despite engagement in a broad range of PD options. There has been comprehensive research of the teachers who did improve. Here, we find that engaging social capital - social networks and informal networks of influence within and between teachers, was a powerful and inexpensive way to build instructional and relational capacity.

Teachers improve significantly from the extended practice of discrete skills related to content delivery in the presence of peers who provide feedback, modeling and opportunities to see the action executed well. Rotational Practice - In one-on-one, small groups, whole group and PLCs, rotational practice will be a primary methodology of tapping into the power of social capital to support teacher growth. As teachers rotate through a cycle of learning about a practice, seeing the practice modeled, simulating the practice and giving and receiving feedback in real time, they establish foundational vulnerability, build trust, strengthen relationships, develop personal ownership and solidify consistent engagement in agreed upon practices.

We will utilize a variety of protocols for this style of "show and tell" professional development as it will be used for all adult learning. The full offering of PD will include:

- New Staff Summer Orientation (2-4 days)
- All Staff Summer Institute (4 days)
- Summer Bridge Staff Institute (10 - 15 days)
- Summer Role Play Walkthrough (5 days)
- Teacher Institute Wednesdays (30 half days)
- Teacher Institute PD Days (8)
- Co-Teaching, Co-Observation and Feedback Cycle (bi-monthly)
- Intellectual Preparation and Lesson Co-Planning (daily)

The quantity and quality of PD is rare. Additionally, everyone receives much of the same training. Any Director, Aide, Assistance, Tech, Manager or Counselor can immediately pick up a small group and administer the Close Reading or Guided Reading model and conduct a small group for Story Problem Math. Experienced and novice teachers will be seen daily, participate in informal observation and feedback loops 20 - 40 times across the year and be formally evaluated 3 times each year. Teachers who receive two consecutive evaluations at the highest level will have extension appointments by the end of March. Those who do not meet the standard by the 3rd evaluation will have their appointments closed at the end of the year.

This level of professional development and teacher growth implementation has been the strongest tool that we have used for the purposes of staff recruitment. Each year, more than 50% of the new teachers that have joined have come from the teachers that joined us

the year before. Even teachers who have left us have played a role in recruiting new teachers to us.

Fiscal Requirements

The implementation of this plan is worthwhile, and costly and will require that we pool funds from many different resources - state, local, federal resources will be used to support the schoolwide plan. The specific outline detailing the funds and usage is included in the ESEA consolidated program application in the budget section. We have indicated here, all of the funding sources impacted.

Check if used	Program funds used to implement components of the schoolwide plan (check all that apply)
X	Title I, Part A: Improving Basis Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies
X	Title II, Part A: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders
	Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, & Academic Achievement
X	Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants
	Title IV, Part B: 21 st Century Schools
X	IDEA 611
X	IDEA 519
X	Other – general operations, private grant funds

Program Evaluation

The way that the program plan was designed lends to continuously monitoring, ease of evaluation, greater engagement and immediate improvement. As indicated in the Needs Assessment section of this report, we have established a data dashboard that will serve as a monitoring tool to regularly assess the impact of the program. The dashboard monitors the following:

Academic Data:

- Reading Plus
- Curriculum Assessments
- Student Grades
- PARCC and NWEA MAP

Non-Academic SEL Data:

- Attendance and Re-enrollment
- Student Discipline

- Satisfaction (student, parent, teacher via TNTP, Panorama and internal surveying)

While we will closely examine each of these measures and pay particular attention to academic growth and achievement in Literacy first and the impact of that growth on Mathematical applications. The dashboard is designed and executed by the Leadership Team in cooperation with EmpoerK12 and reviewed by the Academic and Program Excellence Committee 6 to 8 times each year. At various points of the year, elements of the dashboard are presented to teachers, parents, the Board and the entire community. The dashboard captures performance on the State assessment and other assessments used to evaluate student, program and school performance and is reported to local, state and federal agencies in all applicable formats – and stored at the local site.

The schoolwide program is designed and administered to all students and the growth of all students and subgroup analysis will be used to determine the impact of the program with the design to determine the degree to which the program is impacting 1.5 years growth in Reading for the targeted subgroups in each year that the program is executed.

While most of the shifts to the program have happened in response to data analysis on the way through the year, each year, the annual review will be used to identify and solidify resources and materials to support major shifts moving forward. Again, the shifts have been continuous as stakeholder engagement has continued to identify necessary improvements.