



2016 Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference Sessions

*Washington, D.C.
September 14-18, 2016*

Executive Summary

The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans produced three sessions during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) from September 14-18, 2016, in Washington, D.C. The sessions provided platforms for African American students, caring and concerned adults, and public figures to discuss ways to support African American students.

The ALC sessions included the Professional Development Series for Educators and a specific workshop: ESSA – Supporting Student Success, including through the Ensuring Every Student Succeeds Act; Producing STEM STARS: Supporting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Success among African American Students; and an Emerging Leaders luncheon: Opportunities to Support African American Educational Excellence. Each session placed students' needs at the center of the discussion, which resulted in tough-provoking dialogue between students, educators, and caring and concerned adults. Panels featured high school students, college students, representatives from companies and organizations, as well as public figures. The goal across each session was to ensure attendees walked away with clear, implementable actions they can take to support African American students.

Session Summaries:

1. Professional Development Series for Educators: ESSA – Supporting Student Success, including through the Ensuring Every Student Succeeds Act, September 14, 2016

This session was part of the CBCF ALC Professional Development Series for Educators, which was facilitated by the CBCF in collaboration with the Initiative, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National Education Association (NEA). The interactive session provided educators with an opportunity to hear what students need from caring and concerned adults to ensure success in school and life. The session began by students framing challenges and opportunities for adults to support cognitive, social, and emotional development. Student experts presented recommendations to educators in attendance. Following the panel, Tanya Clay-House, Deputy Assistant Secretary for P-12 Education in the office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development at the U.S. Department of Education provided an overview of how educators can leverage the ESSA to address equity for African American students in public schools.

2. Producing STEM STARS: Supporting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Success among African American Students, September 14, 2016

Hosted in partnership with General Motors, the STEM Stars session focused on providing clear, implementable actions adults and educators can make to support STEM success among African American students. The students on the panel were all young women of color, and included Anicca Harriot, a 20-year-old student at Regent University in Virginia who gained viral internet fame when she [calculated the angle of her dab](#); and Grace Dolan-Sandrino, a student from Duke Ellington School of the Arts who highlighted critical connections between STEM and the arts (STEAM). Additional panelists included Yasmin Graham and Aliyah Smith, Mechanical Engineering students at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; and Tobin Williams, a professional from General Motors. Topics highlighted include: engaging students in STEM early and often; supporting African American students pursuing STEM degrees; the unique challenges African American women face while pursuing STEM careers; and the importance of mentors. The Initiative provided attendees with a [fact sheet](#) with additional information on how to support African American STEM stars.



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3. Emerging Leaders: Opportunities to Support African American Educational Excellence Luncheon, September 16, 2016

The Emerging Leaders luncheon, produced in partnership with ANet and Urban Teachers, was held to discuss opportunities for caring and concerned adults to support the learning and development of all African American students, especially by supporting post-secondary success by unlocking hidden curricula and filling critical gaps often unaddressed by schools. Along with student experts and Initiative ambassadors Grace Dolan-Sandrino and Monet Umana, the panel included Jeff Johnson, award-winning journalist and communications specialist; Towanda Braxton, entrepreneur and star of Braxton Family Values; and Antoinette Smith, a fourth grade teacher at Two Rivers Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. Topics highlighted include: supporting African American students with disabilities; supporting African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) students; and the importance of fostering a sense of community, at home and in schools, where African American students feel they can succeed. Following the panel discussion, table captains facilitated discussions about what was heard and learned to support attendees in identifying individual actions caring and concerned adults and emerging leaders can take to support learning and development for African American students. By the end of the luncheon, all attendees developed plans to individually support the learning and development of African American students in their communities. ANet and Urban Teachers will follow-up to ensure accountability and identify sources of support.

Measurable outcomes:

Social Media Metrics

Twitter Highlights can be found using #CBCFALC16 and #AfAmEd hashtags together.

Photos

Photos from the event are available at <http://imaginephotography4704.zenfolio.com/f649898969>





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Media

Getting More Blacks Interested in STEM <http://www.afro.com/getting-more-blacks-interested-in-stem/>

AFRO-American Newspaper, September 15, 2016

White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans visits Good Morning Washington

<http://wjla.com/features/good-morning-washington/white-house-initiative-on-educational-excellence-for-african-americans-visits-gmw> WJLA (ABC 7), September 16, 2016