



CURRY SCHOOL
of EDUCATION

Vision for the Center for Race and Public Education in the South

By Derrick P. Alridge

Description

The Center for Race and Public Education in the South seeks to support empirical research on a variety of issues that lie at the intersection of race, education, and schooling in the southern United States. According to education researchers Jerome Morris and Carla Monroe, social scientists have largely ignored the racial and socio-political backdrop of African American education in the South, resulting in a detrimental lack of understanding of Black academic performance in this region.¹ The Center for Race and Public Education (CRPES) will 1) explore the legacies of slavery and Jim Crow in the education of African Americans, 2) explore racial and identity development among youth in the South, 3) study the contemporary reasons for lower academic achievement among African Americans and recent immigrants compared to whites, 4) examine the re-segregation of schools, 5) study the role of educators in the academic success of African American students, and 6) examine normative questions about the role of public, k-16 educational institutions in the South. The Center will serve as a lever for informing policy-making on the local, state, and national levels. It will also offer pragmatic solutions to help schools improve the academic performance of African American and immigrant students, enhance teacher training and pedagogy to more effectively educate youth, and recruit more minority teachers to the teaching profession.

Over the next two years, the Center will sponsor major lectures by prominent scholars and thought leaders in education; offer a series of community discussions with educators in Charlottesville and the Central Virginia area; meet with scholars across the University to brainstorm collaborative research projects and opportunities; and host grant writing sessions with successful grant awardees from across the University. In Fall 2018, the Center will also host its first symposium. The two-day symposium will include two keynote speakers, a panel of nationally prominent scholars in the field of race and education, and a community-based project. The symposium will produce an edited volume, titled *Perspectives on Race and Education in the South*, that will be published by the end of 2020.

¹ Jerome E. Morris and Carla Monroe, "Why Study the U.S. South: The Nexus of Race and Place in Investigating Black Student Achievement," *Educational Researcher* 38, no. 1 (January/February 2009): 21-36.

Community Impact

The Center will host a website and repository featuring the research of its affiliated scholars. The website will also feature blog essays by affiliates of the Center on contemporary issues in race and public education. The CRPES will represent the only comprehensive research endeavor of its kind on race and public education in the South. The Center's research on and public engagement with educational issues will position the University of Virginia and the Curry School as the foremost resource on race and public education in the South.

The Center will build its capacity by collaborating and co-sponsoring events with other centers and projects at UVa. We anticipate collaborations with Youth Nex: The U.Va. Center to Promote Effective Youth Development; EdPolicyWorks: The Center on Educational Policy and Workforce Competitiveness; The Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL); and the Teachers in the Movement project. The Center will also collaborate with The Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies. Prospective collaborators also include The Center for the Study of the American South at the University of North Carolina; the Institute for Southern Studies in Durham, North Carolina; and the Southern Oral History Program at the University of North Carolina, among others.

Affiliates

The Center will be interdisciplinary, engaging faculty and graduate students in Curry and across disciplines at the University. Based on the research of current Curry and UVa faculty, the Center will be particularly strong in the following areas: race and ethnicity as social contexts for youth development; the history of African American education; the college and career readiness of underrepresented students and the role of school counselors in enhancing readiness; the mathematics experiences of Black boys and factors that mitigate differences in mathematical experiences and outcomes; the ways in which families and schools promote or inhibit the intellectual and academic development of low-income and immigrant children; the role of teachers' pedagogy in students' academic achievement; the disproportionate placement of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students in special education programs; the relationships between racial socialization and racial identity and other developmental processes; social and academic outcomes of Black children and youth, issues of diversity, equity, social justice, and sustainability/environmental justice in higher education; and civic learning between communities of color and state officials.

Staff:

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