

United Black Male Educators Hosted ‘Educate, Empower, Elevate’ Conference

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CPS students in attendance at the United Black Male Educators’ “Educate, Empower, Elevate” student empowerment conference (Credit: Chicago Public Schools).

On Monday, the United Black Male Educators of Chicago Public Schools hosted its inaugural “Educate, Empower, Elevate” student empowerment conference at Olive Harvey Community College. This landmark event aims to bolster outcomes among Black male students in grades 7-12 from across the District and the city.

“Chicago Public Schools is committed to preparing every student for success in college, careers and civic life. As a District, we acknowledge the disparities that exist in educational outcomes between young Black males and their peers and we are committed to removing barriers and improving outcomes for our CPS Black students,” the CPS said, in part, in a statement.

At the Educate, Empower, Elevate conference, CPS students, staff and families joined CPS CEO Pedro Martinez, Chief Education Officer Bogdana Chkoumbova, Chief

Operating Officer Charles Mayfield, Chief Schools Officer Felicia Sanders, Principal Charles Beavers (Chairman of the United Black Male Educators of CPS), and Director of School and Community Engagement Kareem Pender (Co-Chairman of the United Black Male Educators of CPS).

The conference is one of several initiatives by CPS to address the shortage of Black males entering college. The others include:

- **Coalition of Black and Latinx Teen Males (COBALT):** Inspired by CAUSE's success with Undocumented students, COBALT empowers Black and Latinx male-identifying students in CPS through a student-led model.
- **Postsecondary Landscape Analysis:** OSCP is collaborating with college partners to create tailored programming to support the success of Black and Latinx males.
- **The College Compact:** The College Compact fosters collective action and best practices to support CPS alums, especially those facing significant barriers, in achieving college success.
- **CPS' Teach Chicago Tomorrow Initiative:** The Teach Chicago Tomorrow Initiative targets current CPS students interested in education. It offers two programs—Pathways Partnership and Emerging Educators—and strengthens recruitment efforts, including partnerships with local colleges and universities and HBCUs.

In addition to addressing the disparities concerning Black male students, the UBME group also serves another purpose: to help identify other Black men in the District for leadership opportunities.

Here is the complete CPS statement regarding the UBME:

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is committed to preparing every student for success in college, careers and civic life. As a District, we acknowledge the disparities that exist in educational outcomes between young Black males and their peers and we are committed to removing barriers and improving outcomes for our CPS Black students.

The United Black Male Educators of Chicago Public Schools (UBME) is a group consisting of 22 District Black male leaders who aim to further develop a leadership pipeline for Black men in the District. The group meets on a monthly basis to address the inequities of Black male representation in District leadership positions by identifying and supporting Black male talent within the District who can be promoted into leadership roles and creating and maintaining a pool of quality Black male leadership candidates.

This group ultimately aims to strengthen the District's strategies and practices for

supporting the District's Black male students achieve and succeed, both inside and outside the classroom. And, perhaps most importantly, uplift the Black male voice in CPS leadership and Black male students District-wide.

Here are some more photos from Monday's "Educate, Empower, Elevate" conference (Credit: Chicago Public Schools).

