

Morgan, P.W. (2009). Beyond the racial achievement gap: Creating conditions for African American student success (Doctoral dissertation, Towson University, 2009).

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Dissertation Abstract

Moving beyond the racial achievement gap to determine conditions that promote African American student success requires exploring the history of African American education and what works for successful African American learners. The study uses Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a positive approach and research methodology for unlocking the phenomenon of student success for African American learners—past, present, and future—in a public education system. It employs technology as a data collection and analysis tool, but also as a tutor and tutee.

The study organization is a single gender, selective enrollment, urban public high school. Two groups of respondents are the subjects of this study. The first group consists of African American alumnae of the school who attended it during the post-*Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) era and self-identify as being successful academically and professionally. The second group is that of current African American students who were from among the school's juniors and seniors. Findings inform effective instructional practices as well as characteristics of an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Additionally, the study yields recommendations for the school's future and implications for public education.