

Black Male Graduation Rates Discussed

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WEST PALM BEACH

– What progress has been made and what actions are currently underway to make a difference for students? These and other questions were addressed when Superintendent Wayne Gent hosted the Reconvening of the Graduation Task Force for Black Male Student Achievement on Tuesday.

The task force was initially created by former Superintendent Art Johnson several years ago after a report by the Schott Foundation for Public Education revealed Palm Beach County was on its list of five worst-performing districts with a black male population of 10,000 or more.

The task force was made up of numerous district employees, as well as members of a variety of community organizations and individuals who organized into nine action teams to address different dimensions of the issues. The call to action was intended to determine effective strategies to increase the high school graduation rates and to decrease the suspension rates.

The Jan. 7 agenda includes a welcome and remarks from Chief Academic Officer Cheryl Alligood and Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Keith Oswald, as well as reports from each of the task force action teams.

Oswald said that many people don't realize that work has never stopped on those strategies that the task force determined were needed for improvement.

“Even through the change of administrations and superintendents, district staff and some committed community members continued to move forward on the areas that needed attention to facilitate improved high school graduation rates and a decrease in suspension rates of our African American male students.

Participants at this upcoming meeting will get details on what we have done and the steps we still need to take,” he said.

