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For Immediate Release

DPS establishes Office for Males of Color

District targets academic and social barriers to close achievement gap

For far too long, African American males have landed on the wrong side of a widening achievement gap in urban schools across the nation. Dayton Public Schools is joining a handful of urban districts from New York to California in re-addressing an array of challenges that contribute to the disproportionate rate at which black male students are suspended or expelled, drop out of high school, are chronically absent, or lag behind other groups academically.

The Dayton Board of Education unanimously approved establishment of the Office for Males of Color at their March 15 meeting. The initiative, which begins in the 2016-17 school year, will address academic and social factors to raise graduation and achievement rates.

“We are stepping up our efforts and committing resources to improving student outcomes among young men of color,” said DPS Chief of Innovation David Lawrence. “By focusing on males of color and increasing their achievement, we will increase the achievement of all students.”

In his presentation to the board, Lawrence listed five goals for the new office:

- Reduce disparities in suspensions among males of color
- Increase graduation rate over a four-year period
- Reduce percentage of chronic absenteeism
- Increase the number of black male students taking advanced coursework
- Reduce the number of expulsions

The Office for Males of Color will provide certified mentors, dropout recovery, summer programs and employment, and other supports and opportunities to help increase student success. By improving the outcomes for the district’s more than 4,700 African American male students, Dayton Public Schools is intending to show measurable improvement districtwide.