Closing the Achievement Gap:

Presenter Name
Andrew Springsteen  Sybil Owens
Jameel Mallory  Tanya Ilela
COMPETENCY: ADVOCACY

• Indicate all of the competency progression level(s).
  – Level 1: Foundational and Level
  – Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building
  – Level 3: Agenda Driving

• Please indicate all of the themes within the competency that your presentation is designed to address.
  – Theme: Leverages advocacy practice
  – Theme: Engages Community around issues supporting Student Learning
  – Theme: Interprets and acts on Social Justice initiatives
AAME- African American Male Empowerment

• Who Are We?

• Teachers: Sybil Owens, Velia Munoz
• School Counselors: Tanya Ilela, Andrew Springsteen
• Community Partner University of Colorado Anshiewtz Medical Center: Jameel Mallory
Our School’s Response to Closing the Achievement Gap

• Establish an Equity Team
  – Equity Team training with Pacific Education Group
    • Team Trainings
    • Professional development
    • Establish a African American males as focus group

• Implement Restorative Justice
  – Restore relationships focus
  – Reduce discipline referrals, suspension, expulsions

• Implement Culture of Care (Dr. Tom Cavanaugh)
  – Change power paradigm in the classroom
  – Incorporate Restorative Practices
    • Talking circles
    • Shared power and ownership
The Resistance:

- Obstacles to Building Equity at our school
  - Equity Team Focus
    - Reading articles
    - Learning walks
  - Teacher training
    - Professional development
    - Teachers empowered
  - Fundamentalists
    - Strong voice
    - Influenced others
One of the most difficult & important thing one can do as an educator is self-reflection. Take a moment and think about the assumptions and judgments you have created over the years as it relates to your community, your school, and the microcosm of your classroom.

- **What assumptions or judgments do you bring from the world into your classroom?**

- **What assumptions or judgments are made by your co-workers, administration regarding the achievement gap?**
Your Journey: Closing the Achievement Gap

Examine your list of judgments and obstacles. Are any of those items obstacles or barriers to closing the achievement gap?

Reflect and then discuss obstacles, barriers, and struggles your school has regarding the achievement gap

– *What obstacles or hurdles do we have in common?*

– *What obstacles or hurdles are different?*
Our Response to the Obstacles

• Creating a Social Justice alternative
  • Equity Stories
    • Why I quit?
  • Common Goals
  • Formation of AAME
Your Journey: Reflection

• *Where are you in your journey (closing the achievement gap in your classroom, school, community)?*
PART II: What have we done?
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

Leveraging Advocacy & Engaging the Community

We established African American Male Empowerment Committee:

• I. Common vision & goals
• II. Core Agreements
• III. Autonomy in planning
• IV. Garnered support from leadership
  • Needs (time, supplement funding)
  • Establish trust in purpose and goals
• V. Network with the community for support and involvement
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

I. Common Vision & Goals

**AAME Goals for 2014-2015**

- Increase the graduation rate for African American males
- Provide supports/programs that expose African American males to a variety of mentors, role models, and careers
- Increase academic performance and college acceptance for African American males
- Build bridges with college programs to ensure matriculation from high school to college
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

II. Core agreements

• All programming will be student centered
  • Protect time, space, and voice
• Empower young men to become advocates
• All programming will be facilitated by African American men from the school & community
• Feedback will be built into all programming
• Reflect and assess all programming
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

III. AAME committee retains autonomy in planning

• AAME committee is a independent entity
• AAME remains separate from school/district influence
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

IV. Garnered support from leadership

- Establish trust by sharing our plans
- Initiate meetings with leadership team to share our purpose and goals
- Included leadership in events
- Shared outcomes with leadership and staff
- Express our needs
  - Supplemental funding
  - Student time
AAME Road to Close the Achievement Gap

• V. Network with the community for support and involvement
  • AAME uses existing relationships to invite volunteers to participate i.e. alumni, district employees, Goodwill, UCD, CSU, MSU
  • AAME developed new relationships to invite volunteers to participate (volunteer and/or funding)
  • All volunteers and mentors participating in programming are African American men
  • Save database and ensure we recognize their service
AAME Events 2014-2015

• 9/10 grade African American male college visit
  – STEM activity & United Men of Color
• First annual African American Male Empowerment Summit January 30, 2015
• Field trip to IMPACT conference at MSU
• Hosted Historically Black College and University (HBCU) college fair
• Meet & Greet BBQ for young men and life coaches May 2015
Our Journey: Leveraging Advocacy & Engaging the Community

- Consulted with AEA to create an organization that would allow us to retain autonomy and grow
- Formed Cadre for Ethnic Empowerment (CEE)
  - Created charter and by-laws
  - Created a calendar of meetings and events
- Applied for grants to fund programming and growth
- Met with school leadership to introduce CEE and our revised vision/mission
Established Goals for AAME 2015-2016

- Collect student feedback from events regarding academic and personal needs
- Develop programming to meet academic needs
- Creation of personal and academic goals
- Life coaching to guide and help overcome personal challenges
- African American males create accountability partners with their peers
- Reduce the number of D’s and F’s
- Increase the graduation from 61.4% to 80%
- Decrease chronic absenteeism by 5%
- Increase in concurrent enrollment and IB Programme
- Organize a African American male student committee to co-plan events
- Develop 8th grade transition program to support incoming high school students
- Increase the number of students who complete college visits, attend workshops, conferences, and camps
- Increase the number of African American men who participate in AAME events
- Increase the number of college partners connected to Community P
- Creation of mentoring program for middle and/or elementary school males
Established AAME Events Calendar for 2015-2016

- Meet and Greet Kick-off Event September 2015
  - Young men and life coaches meet and set goals
- Career Day, October 28, 2015
- Creation of AAME Leadership team
  - Representatives from each grade become part of AAME planning committee
- 2nd Annual AAME Summit, March 4th 2016 Anschutz Medical Campus
- Mentoring Program begins (middle school/elementary school)
- Attend IMPACT conference
- Celebration Event May 2016
- ONGOING FOCUS: college visits, workshops, and summer programs, advocacy, attendance, grades
Accomplishments:

Leveraging Advocacy & Engaging the Community

• Reduction of the achievement gap at our school
• Grant money acquired for support and development of AAME and Cadre Ethnic Empowerment team programs
• Student led African American male mentoring group begins in January
  – High school students mentoring elementary and middle school students
• Ethnic Empowerment Leadership team within the school
• African American Female group beginning Spring semester
• African American males co-planning with AAME committee
Your Journey: Reflection
Leveraging Advocacy & Engaging the Community

Each school year gives us the opportunity to change and grow. Take a moment and think about your own journey in advocacy and networking.

Where are you? What have you done?

What would you like to do? What do you need (resources) in order to accomplish it? Are you able to identify how to get what you need?
Building for the Future: Where are we going?

- Cadre Ethnic Empowerment team to begin the support and growth of programs throughout Community P
- Ethnic Empowerment Leadership team within the school
- Continue to support the development of African American Female group
- African American males have a voice in the school
- Continued reduction of the achievement gap at our school
- Establish a African American male leadership team
- Meet with school board to establish budget and district wide events
- Development of on-going Career Exploration opportunities
  - Job shadow
  - Internships
  - Post-secondary planning and support
Your Journey: Reflection
Dream Big, Spread Hope, Inspire Others

Leverages advocacy practice, Engages Community around issues supporting Student Learning, Interprets and acts on Social Justice initiatives

In previous reflections you have identified obstacles, your own assumptions, where you are and what you need. One of our biggest obstacles is our own pessimism.

NOW, take a moment, put that aside and share your successes, your ideas, and dreams for your community.
Session Outcomes (final slide)

• The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:
  – Become an advocate
  – Provide a social justice alternative in your community
  – Engage and network with the community to empower (increase and support) students and families
Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session!