



MISSION

The African American Female Excellence initiative was created to inspire excellence and accelerate academic achievement amongst African American female students and their families through institutionalizing systemic change in Oakland Unified School District.

Launched in 2017, African American Female Excellence (AAFE) is the first district-wide initiative of its kind in the nation, currently serves over 350 girls in K-12 schools across Oakland. AAFE provides daily classes and weekly groups that empower Black girls and young women, fostering a sense of belonging, pride, and leadership. Integrated into the core school day, these programs are designed to nurture academic achievement, social-emotional development, and cultural identity. AAFE is actively revolutionizing how public educational institutions serve Black students in Oakland.

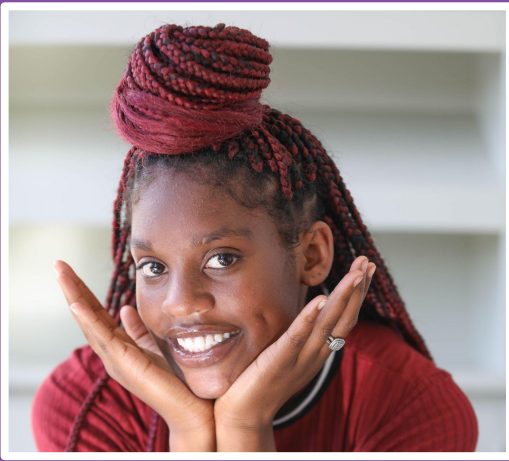
THE POWER OF AAFE

AAFE provides daily Black girl-centered classes and weekly girls' groups integrated into the core school day, along with city-wide programs and events. AAFE launched a Curriculum Design Team to create classroom- and program-based lessons that enhance academic achievement and promote intellectual curiosity and engagement for African American girls in the District. This curriculum addresses achievement through a lens of culturally relevant pedagogy and rigor, centered on African American historical trajectories, focusing on the experiences of African American girls and women.

Building on this foundation, AAFE offers additional opportunities at the high school level. Students can enroll in the A-G accredited course, "Mastering African American Female Identity," where they earn elective credit on their transcript, further preparing them for college and beyond.

FIRST YEAR ACTIVE
2017

TARGETED SPECIALISTS
Iminah Laura Ahmad,
Adrieanna Williams



IMPACT

Increased Attendance/Reduced Chronic Absence

Black girls participating in AAFE programming attend school more regularly than those who do not. AAFE students saw an 11% decrease in chronic absence rates compared to the average for Black girls in OUSD. AAFE emphasizes building meaningful relationships between students and adults, which education research shows encourages better attendance. At midyear, 73% of AAFE students had positive attendance (95% or more), compared to just 35% of African American girls district-wide.

Increased Cultural Awareness/Life Skills

AAFE middle school students showed a 6% improvement in their ability to "perspective take" when faced with conflicting points of view. ***Perspective-taking**—understanding someone else's viewpoint—is connected to greater empathy and better communication.

BEYOND THE DATA

One family of four sisters joined AAFE from its start in 2017. Each has grown into a leader, overcoming the trauma of their mother's experience with gender-based violence and abandonment by their father during COVID. With AAFE's support, they have excelled academically, all maintaining honor roll status, while initiating new programs like a student council at their elementary school and a health academy council at their high school. Their mother, an undocumented English learner, has also benefited from AAFE's support—securing her first professional role in education and enrolling in a teaching credential program. The eldest daughter recently entered college on a full pre-med scholarship. Their story exemplifies AAFE's impact, showing how community support and resources can transform lives and empower families to overcome obstacles on their path to success.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Advisory Council
- Annual Oscar Wright African American Honor Roll Celebration
- Black Family Summit
- Black Girl Power Conference
- Black Graduation Ceremony (OUSD)
- Black History Month Events
- Black to School Celebration
- Honor Roll
- Kwanzaa Kuonyesha Showcase and Celebration
- Women's History Month Events