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## **New Report “Yes We Can” Shows America’s Public Schools Fail Over Half the Nation’s Black Male Students**

*Schott Foundation Releases Fourth State-by-State Data Set Showing an Overwhelming Majority of U.S. School Districts and States Are Failing to Provide the Resources Black Males Need to Close the National Racial Graduation Gap*

*Report Also Highlights Measures Needed to Address This National Crisis*

New York, August 17, 2010 – “Yes We Can: The 2010 Schott 50 State Report on Black Males in Public Education” reveals that the overall 2007/8 graduation rate for Black males in the U.S. was only 47 percent. Half of the states have graduation rates for Black male students below the national average. The report highlights concerns that New York's graduation rate for its Regents diploma is only 25 percent for Black male students. New York City, the district with the nation's highest enrollment of Black students, only graduates 28 percent of its Black male students with Regents diplomas on time. Overall, each year over 100,000 Black male students in New York City alone do not graduate from high school with their entering cohort. These statistics—and the other alarming data—point to a national *education and economic* crisis.

The fourth biennial report released by the Schott Foundation for Public Education provides state-by-state data that illustrate which U.S. school districts and states are failing to provide the resources Black male students, and all students, need for the opportunity to learn. Without targeted investments to provide the core, research-proven resources to help Black male students succeed in public education, the report concludes, they are being set up to fail.

The report highlights the success of New Jersey’s Abbott plan, which demonstrates that when equitable resources are available to all students, systemic change at the state level can yield significant results. New Jersey is now the only state with a significant Black population with a greater than 65 percent high school graduation rate for Black male students.

“Taken together, the numbers in the Schott Foundation for Public Education’s report form a nightmarish picture—one that is all the more frightening for being both true and long-standing,” said Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO of the Harlem Children’s Zone, who provided the foreword in the report. “These boys are failing, but I believe that it is the responsibility of the adults around them to turn these trajectories around. All of us must ensure that we level the playing field for the hundreds of thousands of children who are at risk of continuing the cycle of generational poverty. The key to success is EDUCATION.”

“It is not enough to focus on saving the few. We must focus on systemic change to provide all our children the opportunity to learn,” said Dr. John H. Jackson, President and CEO of the Schott Foundation for Public Education.

Highlights of the report’s findings include:

- The five worst performing districts **with large Black male student enrollment** are New York City, N.Y. (28%); Philadelphia, Pa. (28%); Broward County, Fla. (39%); Chicago, Ill. (44%) and Nashville, Tenn. (47%).
- The states with Black male student enrollment exceeding 100,000 that have the highest graduation rates for Black male students are New Jersey (69%), Maryland (55%), California (54%) and Pennsylvania (53%).
- Some states with small populations, such as Maine, North Dakota, New Hampshire and Vermont have graduation rates for Black males higher than the national average for White males.
- The districts with Black male student enrollment exceeding 10,000 that have highest graduation rates for Black male students are Newark, N.J. (76%); Fort Bend, Texas (68%); Baltimore County, Md. (67%) and Montgomery County, Md. (65%).
- The districts with the lowest graduation rates for Black male students are Pinellas County, Fla. (21%); Palm Beach County, Fla. (22%); Duval County, Fla. (23%); Charleston County, S.C. (24%) and Buffalo, N.Y. (25%).
- Dade County, Fla.; Cleveland, Ohio and Detroit, Mich. also have notably low graduation rates for Black male students—each at 27 percent.

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The report outlines solutions—listing the “Conditions for Success” that are critical for providing a fair and substantive opportunity to learn and the “Conditions for Failure.” “Yes We Can” calls on the federal government and states to ensure that all students have a right to an opportunity to learn, not as a matter of competition or location, but as a civil and human right.

This report is being released in a context of significant critiques of the failed policies that led to this national crisis.

The report concludes: The American educational system is systemically failing Black males.

"By providing these data, we hope to provide educational advocates and policymakers the platform needed to make policy decisions that are educationally sound, not politically feasible. America and its states and communities will not thrive in the 21st century without providing all students—including Black males—a fair and substantive opportunity to learn," said Jackson.

For the full report, “Yes We Can: The 2010 Schott 50 State Report on Black Males in Public Education,” including national summary and detailed state data, go to [www.blackboysreport.org](http://www.blackboysreport.org).

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#### **About The Schott Foundation for Public Education**

Founded in 1991, The Schott Foundation for Public Education seeks to develop and strengthen a broad-based and representative movement to achieve fully resourced high quality preK-12 public education. Web site: [www.schottfoundation.org](http://www.schottfoundation.org)

