Successful Black boys in school mathematics receives little attention in the research literature, while there is a vast amount of literature that describes the academic achievement and schooling experiences of Black boys in terms of failure. The underachievement and low-level course enrollment patterns of Black boys is well documented in the literature. However, there are Black boys who stand in opposition to the literature that documents their failure and underachievement. Black boys’ mathematics identities are shaped by culture, community, and experiences with mathematics (Berry, 2003, 2008, 2011, & 2016). The development of a positive mathematics identity is essential towards helping Black boys sustain an interest in mathematics and develop persistence with mathematics.

Examining the perceptions of successful Black boys is critical to identifying the strengths, skills, and significant factors that promote their success. This session will use vignettes and the voices of Black boys who have been successful with school mathematics. Specifically, the session will examine the intersections between race, gender, identity, agency, and persistence as frameworks for discussing the mathematics experiences of Black boys. Within this framework, identity, agency, and persistence are central to understanding how Black boys make sense of, and respond to, ways they learn and participate within their mathematical experiences.

**Black Learners & School Mathematics**

Title: Catalyzing Change: Identity, Agency, Positionality and Equitable Instructional Practices

Description: This session makes connections between equitable instructional practices and identity, agency and positionality. Specifically, the session uses a vignette to examine how high cognitively demanding task provide opportunities to engage learners in meaning discourse positioning learners as mathematically competent. The session uses mathematical discourse community as a framework for connecting mathematics norms of discourse to identity and agency. While this session highlights Catalyzing Change for High School Mathematics, the discussions of teaching practices that cultivate identity, agency, and positionality is appropriate for all educators.

Identity, Agency, & Positionality: Teaching Practices


