

WSSU, city/county schools launch college prep program

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

With Winston-Salem State University's help, a selected number of local middle and high school students will get a head start on college preparation next year.

WSSU has received a \$510,000 grant from the Kenan Foundation to implement a five-year program aimed at helping students identify and work on their deficiencies before they get to college.

The program is called "Kenan's Pre-College Program for Improving Standards and Preparation for College for Middle Grade and Secondary Students."

"Many of the students who graduate from high school come to universities and have to be placed in remedial courses such as math and English," said Dr. Melvin F. Gadson, director of the

education division at WSSU. "The intent of this proposal is to improve deficiencies of students before they enter college," said Gadson, who is also director of the program.

WSSU Chancellor Cleon F. Thompson Jr. said he considers the program to be highly significant.

"Although the program will only reach a small number of students in its initial years, it's still a beginning," he said.

Thompson said the Kenan Foundation is to be praised for helping to address the problem. "Hopefully, we will be able to convince other funding agencies to join us in the development of this concept," he said.

The need for the program is widespread, says the proposal that details the program.

All students who enter one of the 16 public universities in North Carolina in the fall of 1988 will have had to meet a new set of

minimum requirements, the proposal says.

"In order to approve the competency levels of prospective college students, it is necessary to intervene in their educational program as early as grade level eight, if not earlier," the proposal says.

The program is not targeted specifically toward blacks, Gadson said.

"And we're not trying to select students who score in the 90th percentile of the California Achievement Test, or students who score on the lower echelon, either," he said, "but students who score average" and demonstrate potential and may need help and tutoring."

Gadson said that in developing the program, he worked closely with Dr. Zane E. Eargle, superintendent of the city/county school system; Dr. Barbara K. Phillips, assistant to the superintendent; Dr. Roland Doepner, assistant superinten-

dent for support services, and Bill Albright, director of guidance.

"We have their full support and approval as well as a letter of endorsement," Gadson said. "They have been very cooperative."

The \$510,000 that the program received will be spread out over the five-year period, Gadson said. The money will be used for tutorial services, staff development, summer enrichment programs and year-round educational programs.

Gadson said that hiring of the staff, identifying the target group students and selections of committees will take place between now and Dec. 31.

The instructional part of the program is scheduled to begin next year.

A total of 60 students from eighth, ninth and 10th grade will be identified each year by School Advisory Teams, or SAT, which are composed of the schools'

principals, counselors, social workers, psychologists and teachers. There will be a superintendent-appointed team at each school.

The students in the experimental group of the program will come from the following schools: Hill and Northwest middle schools and North Forsyth and Parkland high schools.

A control group of students will be selected from Philo and Mineral Spring middle schools and Carver and Glenn high schools.

"Once the students are identified and the teachers are selected to participate, we'll take those students and try to place them with the very best math and English teachers," Gadson said.

"We'll put them in the regular classes with those teachers," he said. "At the end of the school year, the superintendent has agreed to let the teachers work with those students until it's time for the teachers to leave."

These teachers will identify the deficiencies the students have, he said.

"We will also set up additional tutorial hours after school or on the weekends if the student so

desires," he said. "We plan to go into the community and select people to serve as mentors to the students."

During the summer, there will be a three-to-four-week intensive workshop getting the student ready for high-level algebra and reading skills, Gadson said. He said field trips will also be planned.

"We're planning a full-scale program for them," he said. "During the five-year period, we'll begin a longitudinal study. We will select a new group each year, but we will continue to provide additional support services to the past groups. We plan to follow these students and track them through graduation."

"At the end of five years, we will be able to determine whether what we did made a difference," he said.

He said the control group and the experimental group will be compared.

The ultimate success of the program will depend on the cooperation of parents, students, the school system and the university, Thompson said. "All four must come together if it is to work," he said.

South Boston High

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The 90 uniformed police officers who once patrolled the halls have been replaced with six plainclothes security guards who carry no weapons but have arrest powers, Winegar said. Gone are the metal detectors and demonstrators, who had made the school a rallying point in the

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had 47 percent black participants. And Food Stamps, cut by 13.8 percent, had 37 percent black recipients.

These cuts in human needs programs undermined the economic foundations of hundreds of thousands of black households.

Conversely, areas of massive government spending over the past six years have helped to hike black joblessness.

The shift in federal spending priorities from human services to military hardware has lowered job opportunities for blacks, Hispanics and other people of color, because these populations are not represented in those firms which receive military contracts.

If we use 1980 employment statistics, a shift in one million jobs from educational institutions, social services and health services to firms which are military-related would create a net loss of more than 60,000 jobs for black women and men.

The very real, and not hypothetical, shift in such government expenditure has had the net impact of disrupting thousands of black families' conditions.

Some of the talk about the black family's crisis is indeed accurate. Black-on-black crime, spouse abuse and other manifestations of anti-social behavior are quite real.

But at the level of national public policy, there is an attempt to attribute all of the black community's problems to internal flaws - that black woman are promiscuous, that black teenagers are all criminally inclined, that black men are lazy or non-existent husbands, etc. Such an effort, which has recently been advanced by conservative Democrats as well as Reaganites, must be denounced for what it is: an explicitly racist attempt to shift the burden of responsibility to the backs of black people for the effects of racism.

If we had full employment, universal health care, decent and free public housing, most of the black family's problems would disappear. The "crisis" is essentially a crisis of the system in which black people find themselves.

Dr. Manning Marable is a professor of political science and sociology at Purdue University.

fight against desegregation.

Several students interviewed said they have a mixture of friends who may reflect the school's racial balance, but skin color is not a concern.

"I have friends of all kinds," said Jimmy Nunez of the Roxbury section, a 17-year-old Hispanic youth entering his senior year. "I don't really think about it. If you want to be my friend, you be my friend."

"In the field, we're all one team," said senior Jose Lobo of the city's Dorchester section as he greeted old teammates from the school's football team. "You have no racial problems then."

"Some kids are really prejudiced, but you have that anywhere," said Bob Janvo, a special education teacher, who added that

most students get along well.

"They're not suburban kids whose parents are making \$45,000 to \$60,000 a year. They need help," he said.

Although the school receives students from three housing projects with the worst crime rates in the city, the problems that spill over into school tend to be intraracial, said Winegar.

Most of the parents who opposed the busing have moved their children to private or parochial schools, said Ian Forman, a school department spokesman, who reported no racial incidents among any of the city's 58,756 students in 120 schools during the opening days of classes last week.

"It's been remarkably free of problems at all levels. It had been

last year and the year before," he said.

Under the desegregation plan, the school department buses 28,000 students to school and 7,000 others ride public transportation, Forman said. A task force appointed by School Superintendent Laval S. Wilson, the 351-year-old system's first black superintendent, is reviewing the student assignment plan, but no changes are expected before the next school year, Forman said.

Under Garrity's final orders in the case, changes may be made in the plan if all parties in the desegregation case agree. And Winegar said he and others will fight to see that progress is made.

"I am the last remaining remnant of Judge Garrity," Winegar said.

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