

No Girls Allowed?

• **ARE BLACK BOYS** better off attending same-sex schools? Some educators and academic reformists say yes, believing that the higher dropout and suspension rate that African-American and Latino male students experience could be alleviated if more of them attended all-boys institutions. But others wonder: Are single-sex schools really a cure-all? JET's guest experts weigh in. —by *Aisha I. Jefferson*



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> Single-gender education for African-American boys is a viable and important option because such classes generally offer a caring, disciplined environment where youths can learn. Many of these students need positive mentors to shape their identity, and male teachers in all-boys schools can fill that void. When they experience high-quality instruction, Black boys have a stronger possibility of remaining in school—with fewer discipline problems and increased enrollment in Advanced Placement classes. This can help them remain focused and moving in a positive direction after graduation.



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> We should be cautious about defaulting to single-sex education as a way of improving the well-being of Black students. Success at these schools is often related to factors that have nothing to do with gender. It's because classroom sizes are smaller, parents are engaged and teachers have higher expectations. Also, there's the danger of stereotyping. Sometimes, with African-American students, the goal of separation boils down to disciplining boys and making sure girls don't get pregnant, when the real focus must be providing students with the essential life skills.