



The Baltimore Curriculum Project (BCP) empowers four neighborhood charter schools in East Baltimore with the tools, training and support they need to help every child succeed.

BCP Schools

City Springs School - citysprings.org
 Collington Square School - baltimorecityschools.org/97
 Hampstead Hill Academy - hha47.org
 Wolfe Street Academy - baltimorecityschools.org/23

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CLASS NOTES

SPRING 2012
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Around the World in Four Newsletters...

This series features thoughts about education from educators around the world.



Pasi Sahlberg, Director
 National Centre for International
 Mobility and Cooperation (CIMO)

What is the purpose of public education?

Public education guarantees every child a good basic education and equal opportunities to further learning. Public education also equalizes the differences that income inequalities and

other socioeconomic characteristics create for different learners. In brief, public education is a basic human right and a basic service for all children and their families. One of the key factors behind Finland's good and equitable

educational performance in international studies is the strong role of public education.

How does your country measure school success and hold schools accountable for educating students effectively?

Finland is not very fond of measuring education. This is perhaps because our definition of school success is very different compared to how success is understood in the United States or in much of the world. A successful school in Finland is one that is able to help all children to learn and fulfill their aspirations, both academic and non-academic. Many educators in Finland think that measuring what matters in school is difficult, if not impossible. That's why assessment of and in Finnish schools is first and foremost a responsibility

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ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A BCP 5TH GRADER?

Join the Baltimore Curriculum Project for our *Are You Smarter Than a BCP 5th Grader?* fundraising gala on Friday, April 20, 2012 from 6:30pm-10:30pm at Hampstead Hill Academy.

Watch the best quiz show in town as BCP students compete against Baltimore City Schools CEO **Andres Alonso**, Houston Texans Wide Receiver **Bryant Johnson**, and Baltimore City **Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake**.

Enjoy dinner, drinks, a silent auction, and live music by Tony Berry and New Money. Seating is limited to only 200 attendees and will sell out.

Thank you to the Honorary Committee members for their support: Muriel Berkeley, George Hess, Larry Matlack, Jon McGill, Mike Niccolini, and Stuart Simms.

Purchase tickets at baltimorecp.org

Quiz Show Contestants & Host:



Baltimore City Schools
 CEO Andres Alonso



Houston Texan
 Bryant Johnson



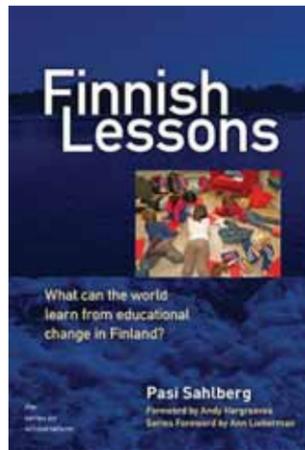
Mayor Stephanie
 Rawlings-Blake



Teacher and Actor
 Koli Tengela (Host)

Sponsors:





Read Jon McGill's review of *Finnish Lessons* at: bit.ly/fireview

of teachers and principals in schools. They report to parents and authorities how successful their school is in achieving commonly set goals. By this definition, school success is a subjective thing that varies from one school to another.

We don't use the term 'accountability' when we talk about what schools are expected to do in Finland. Instead, we expect that teachers and principals will be responsible collectively for making all children successful in school.

There is a big difference between social responsibility for all children's learning in school and holding each teacher accountable for their own pupils' achievement through data from standardized tests. External reviewers of Finnish education have repeatedly recognized this difference between Finnish schools and American schools, for example. Shared responsibility has created strong mutual trust within the Finnish education system. This is a frequently mentioned success factor of Finnish education. As a result, we don't need external standardized tests, teacher evaluation, or inspection to assure high quality.

How do the schools in your country address the impact of poverty on education?

Finland is a Nordic welfare state where all families are guaranteed public health and other social services for free or subsidized by state. Childcare begins before birth. Mothers receive pre-natal support and infant care is available free of charge for all families. Every child goes through systematic health care and frequent development checks before school starts at age 7. Most of what needs to be done to address the impact of poverty is done before school starts.

Schools in Finland provide all pupils with healthy school lunches and afternoon snacks, comprehensive health care, dental care, and psychological help free of charge. All pupils also receive access to high-quality special education services in their own schools

Class Notes

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All You Need is Love

By Larry Schugam, Executive Vice President
Baltimore Curriculum Project

The purpose of public education should be to increase the amount of love in the world.

I often hear teachers say that "students won't care what you know until they know that you care."

In my education I had some teachers who seemed to care, but the overall impression was that education was a weeding-out process. The system was mainly fear-based – if you don't pass these tests, you won't get into a good college and you'll wind up in the gutter.

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throughout basic education. Special education in Finland is based on early intervention and immediate individualized support that is provided by trained experts. About one-third of Finnish basic school students are in special education of some kind. The child poverty rate in Finland is about 4%, and therefore there are very few children in Finnish schools who suffer from the impacts of poverty in school compared to many other countries, including the United States.

How do we educate children to become citizens of a global community instead of merely competitors in a global economy?

School education should focus much more than it does today on the social and moral development of children. Unfortunately the dominance of standardized testing and the race-to-the-top mentality are doing just the opposite. Becoming a member of any community means that an individual needs to have adequate interpersonal skills, understanding of different cultures, and a good understanding of moral responsibilities in life. It is character and mind that matter in competitive labor market today, not being among winners in knowledge tests.

In Finland we think that children need to have a safe and balanced learning environment that is equally guided by academic and non-academic curricula; team learning and individual work; and formal and informal learning. We also believe that it is very important to learn about the world and its different languages and cultures from very early on. That's why we make foreign language learning and international education high priorities. There is a Finnish saying: "Real winners don't compete." We believe that what children learn to do together today, they can do alone tomorrow.

WOLFE STREET ACADEMY

Hopkins Graduate Students Provide Tutoring

By Connie Phelps, Community School Coordinator, Wolfe Street Academy



Every day last September, as we eased in the school year and started the after school program, 5th grader Mario would ask "when's my tutor coming back?"

Mario's tutor, Linnea Zimmerman, is a student at the The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who has been meeting with Mario on a weekly basis since he was in 3rd grade, to help him with reading and math skills.

Linnea is a member of The Wolfe Street Academy Workforce, a volunteer program run by students at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine since 2006. The program has grown every year since then, and now includes volunteers from The Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and The Johns Hopkins Department of Biomedical Engineering.

Mario has a strong connection with Linnea and in the time he has been working with her, Mario has improved academically to a point where he is ready to graduate from both elementary school and the tutoring program.

This school year, 35 Wolfe Street Academy children are receiving individual weekly tutoring services, mostly from graduate students with the Wolfe Street Academy

Workforce. Fourteen of the tutors have tutored at Wolfe Street for two years or more.

Deborah Apple, a 3rd grade teacher who is actively involved in the program, has noticed the value of having seasoned tutors returning for a second year or more.

"It is wonderful to have so many second year tutors at Wolfe Street this year. The relationships they build with students and the academic support they provide are invaluable for both struggling students and their teachers," said Ms. Apple.

Many of the second year tutors are medical students who have now moved on to the next phase of their own education – hospital rotations and studying for their Board exams.

The current group of graduate student leaders has taken action to both retain volunteers and make sure they have the skills necessary to help young tutees overcome challenges.

In spring 2011, when she assumed leadership of the program, Sara Fuhrhop began a recruitment campaign to immediately replace second year medical students who had started their rotations.

"The second year medical students have truly enjoyed working with the students at Wolfe Street Academy," said Ms. Fuhrhop.

"As future physicians, we must be effective teachers and altruistic partners with our patients. Our experiences as tutors at Wolfe Street Academy have reaffirmed these values and have taught us so much about how to embody these qualities in our future careers."

Recently, tutors Paul



Gilbert and Julia Thorn organized a panel discussion about ADHD and education, which included Wolfe Street Academy special educator Katrina Kickbush; a psychologist from The Baltimore Lab School; and a child psychiatrist from Hopkins Hospital.

The panel discussed the difficulties that kids, teachers and tutors face in educating children with ADHD and other special needs.

The efforts are paying off! Last year, NWEA testing showed that children in individual tutoring, all of whom have a history of struggling academically, grew academically at an equal rate with their peers who did not have a history of difficulties.

We would like to thank the students from The Johns Hopkins Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health and Biomedical Engineering for supporting our students.



HAMPSTEAD HILL ACADEMY

Articles on high school, debate and restorative practices by Geri Swann
Director of Community Outreach, Hampstead Hill Academy



Ingenuity Project Accepts Hampstead Hill Students

Two Hampstead Hill Academy students, Kathy Le and Si Lin, have been accepted into the Ingenuity Project at Poly's Class of 2016.

"These students were chosen from over 200 applicants and are among the best and brightest students in Baltimore," wrote Ingenuity Project Director Dolores Costello in the acceptance letter.

"A great deal of their academic success is due to the preparation they received from Hampstead Hill Academy."

The Ingenuity Project at Poly is a citywide public school program for academically gifted students in grades 9 to 12. The focus of Ingenuity is on advanced mathematics, science and research.

For more information visit: ingenuityproject.org



High School Decisions are In...

High School decisions are in and an impressive number of Hampstead Hill students have been accepted by selective schools.

Thirty of Hampstead Hill's 46 eighth grade students have been accepted to their first-choice high schools; 42 out of 46 were accepted to one of their top three choices; and 26 out of 46 were accepted to Baltimore City College, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Western High School or the Baltimore School for the Arts.

The top two scoring 8th graders in the entire district to be admitted to Baltimore Polytechnic Institute are from Hampstead Hill.

In addition to Baltimore City Public Schools, our students have been accepted to some of the most selective private schools in Baltimore including Friends School of Baltimore, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Mount Saint Joseph High School, Archbishop Curley High School, St. Paul's School for Girls, Mercy High School and the Institute of Notre Dame. We are very proud of our 2012 class of 8th graders.

Hampstead Hill Ranks #1 in Debate League, Again!

Congratulations to the Hampstead Hill Debate Team for again ranking number one in the Baltimore Urban Debate League. Hampstead Hill narrowly beat City Springs Elementary/Middle School by one win to take the top spot.

Congratulations to all the debaters for doing an excellent job. Special congratulations to Gisele Easton and TyJia Stone who were the number one Elementary Debate team.

Hampstead Hill Hosts City-Wide Restorative Practices Event

On February 16, 2012 Hampstead Hill Academy, Baltimore Curriculum Project and the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) hosted an inspiring introduction to Restorative Practices for over 40 Baltimore City Schools principals and teachers. Attendees visited classrooms and participated in restorative circles.

Baltimore Curriculum Project President Muriel Berkeley, Hampstead Hill Academy Principal Matthew Hornbeck and City Springs Middle/Elementary School Principal Rhonda Richetta delivered presentations on their experiences implementing this positive approach to building school culture.

BCP brought Restorative Practices to City Springs, Collington Square School, Hampstead Hill Academy and Wolfe Street Academy in 2007 with the support of grants from OSI-Baltimore and the Goldsmith Family Foundation and training from IIRP.

At Hampstead Hill Restorative Practices has been instrumental in reducing negative behaviors and maximizing academic time at the school.

At City Springs School suspensions dropped from 86 in 2008-09 to 10 a year later.

City Schools has taken note of these successes and the event on February 16th was held to share what is working in BCP schools.

It is our hope that other schools will embrace Restorative Practices as part of a strategy to engage students and improve school climate.

Kids should know that the reason we require them to spend so much time in school is because we love them and want them to have the knowledge, skills, and assets they need to live healthy, fulfilling, connected lives full of joy and love.

There is a lot of talk now about kids being prepared for the workforce, and this is critical, but the people who recently crashed our economy and defrauded millions were very well-educated and prepared for the workforce; however, I imagine that their capacity to love and consider the needs of the millions they defrauded may have been sub-par.

We need restorative schools that restore everyone involved – students, teachers, parents, administrators, and operators. An environment where people embrace the ideal that "it is better to be kind."

We all come with some kind of baggage and wounds. Schools should be places of healing, where people learn to communicate and work together. Where challenges and discord are viewed not as excuses to lambast people behind their backs; but as opportunities to grow spiritually. Where we all get the healing we need to love and respect one another.

One of my teachers always says "Learn to love your relatives. You don't have to like them, but you have to love them, which can be hard because some of them are such \$%&*!"

I find the following excerpt from an NPR interview with Cornel West to be on point:

COX: Why, thank you. I appreciate the compliment. Let's begin with this, Cornel, if we might. You talk a lot about the lack of love. You say there is a lack of available love in black America. What do you mean by that?

Prof. WEST: Well, I think it's true in the society as a whole. We have a market-driven society so obsessed with buying and selling and obsessed with power and pleasure and property, it doesn't leave a whole lot of time for non-market values and non-market activity so that love and trust and justice, concern for the poor, that's being pushed to the margins, and you can see it.

You can see it in terms of the obsession on Wall Street with not just profits but greed, more profit, more profit. You see it in our television culture that's obsessed with superficial spectacle. You see it even in our educational systems, where the market model becomes central. It's a matter of just gaining a skill or gaining access to a job to live in some vanilla suburb, as opposed to becoming a critical citizen concerned with public interest and common good ...

And when I talk about love, I'm talking about something that's great, though, brother. I'm talking

about something that will sustain you. It's like an Aretha Franklin song, brother, or a Coltrane solo or Beethoven symphony, something that grabs you to the gut and gives you a sense of what it is to be human.

Bringing DI Back

Why, in 2002, would BCP President Muriel Berkeley travel over 750 miles to Jacksonville, Florida to speak to the Duval County School Board about the benefits of Direct Instruction (DI)?



Why, in 2012, would a group of church leaders, teachers and administrators from Jacksonville, Florida travel over 750 miles to Baltimore to observe DI in action? **Because it works!**

On February 21, 2012 this group visited two of BCP's model DI schools: City Springs Elementary/Middle School and Hampstead Hill Academy.

The group was organized by iCare, a Jacksonville-base nonprofit, which in the mid-1990's launched a campaign to implement DI in low-performing schools. After a long, hard struggle, iCare succeeded in bringing DI to 12 elementary schools.

Reading achievement skyrocketed. For example, Englewood Elementary had 55% of their students reading on grade level before DI and that number increased to 86% once they implemented the program.

"Direct Instruction, when implemented with fidelity, is an effective program for struggling students," said Kathy Blackman of Christ Episcopal Church.

Despite the overwhelming success, in 2003 a new superintendent abandoned DI. Today, iCare and other organizations in Florida, such as FAST in St. Petersburg, are working to bring DI back to their school systems.

"The experience of seeing the success that the schools in Baltimore are having is a testimony to quality, proven curriculum applied with diligence and with fidelity by committed educators who have the support and guidance of great administrators," said Dr. Bruce Havens, Pastor of Arlington Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.

"I hope we can find the same kind of success here in Duval County. Congratulations to the Baltimore Project in providing hope to students who otherwise might get left behind."

CITY SPRINGS ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Senator Nathaniel McFadden Supports Irona Pope Sports Complex

In January 2012 Senator Nathaniel McFadden facilitated an anonymous donation of \$50,000 toward the construction of the Irona Pope Sports Complex at City Springs School.

The dream of a City Springs Sports Complex began in 2007 when a group of City Springs students presented Principal Rhonda Richetta with a petition at the school's daily morning assembly. The petition urged her to repair the run-down field, playground and basketball courts adjacent to the school.

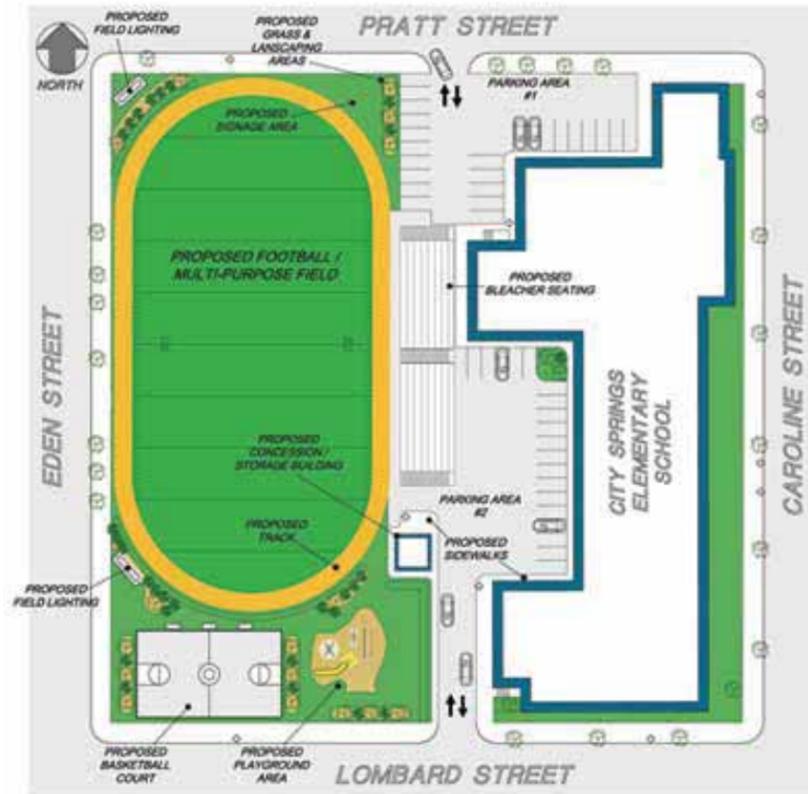
"We really want to play football," read the petition. "The complex outside has many things wrong with it. It is outlined with a very uneven grass, it has broken glass on the rocky concrete, a broken gate, a swing set without swings, a basketball court with only one goal and it is very trashy.

"This needs to be fixed because many children hurt themselves on the complex...we can have a football field, basketball court, a swing set and a gate to keep intruders out and to keep our fellow peers safe. This will benefit our school because our children will be more safe and will be able to stay healthy."

Senator McFadden credits long-time community activist Irona Pope with motivating him to support the project.

"Ms. Pope worked tirelessly to empower the families of East Baltimore," said Senator McFadden.

"Before she passed in 2009, she told me to take care of City Springs School. When I read Liz Bowie's article



about City Springs in The Sun a few weeks ago, her words came back to me."

Ms. Pope worked for Baltimore City Public Schools for 36 years - 34 as a parent liaison. She was one of six parents who found the money and lobbied to build City Springs School.

Her many accomplishments included helping 44 people move out of Perkins Homes Public Housing and into their own homes; working with residents to found a food co-op; and running a weekly peer mediation group for City Springs students.

"We plan to name the Sports Complex in honor of Ms. Pope and everything she did to support City Springs School and the residents of East Baltimore," said City Springs Principal Rhonda Richetta.

"Even now, she continues to bring people together to improve our community. We are extremely grateful for this gift and Senator McFadden's support."

To support the Irona Pope Sports Complex visit: bit.ly/sportscomplex

City Springs Sweeps MLK Day Writing Competition, Again!

City Springs School has swept the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Writing Competition for the second year in a row. The competition is hosted by the Baltimore Urban Debate League

(BUDL) and The Walters Art Museum. Congratulations to Chelsea Gilmer (4th grade), Charisma Coles (6th grade), and Shardai Little (7th grade) for winning the Elementary and Middle

School Divisions. They presented their winning essays at the Walters Art Museum's MLK Jr. Family Festival on January 16th. Read the essays at: www.baltimorecp.org/mlk2012.pdf

COLLINGTON SQUARE SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

City Council President Young & Commander Russell Perform with Collington Square Theater Arts Class

On December 20, 2011 Baltimore City Council President Bernard "Jack" Young and Eastern District Baltimore City Police Commander Major Melvin Russell joined an all male cast of middle grades students at Collington Square School of the Arts to perform a new play: *It's Not About Things, It's About People!: A Holiday Celebration*.

Council President Young portrayed a Baltimore City Sanitation Worker whose son is embarrassed by his father's job.

Major Russell played a police officer who interacts with a group of young African-American men on the street.

The situation improves the perception that the young men and the police officer have of one another.

The play was written in collaboration with the students in Collington Square's Theater Arts Class, which is taught by Koli Tengella of Social Justice Theater.

The performance was part of

Collington Square School of the Arts' annual Winter Program, which featured the school's outstanding arts programs.

The event included a choir performance led by Choir Director Daniel Dorsey, a band performance led by Music Teacher Josh Soto, and a spoken word poetry performance, which was facilitated by Librarian/Media Specialist Dawn Edwards.

"The Arts are alive at Collington Square School and Mr. Tengella's drama groups are just one example of the outstanding opportunities our students have for creative self expression," said Larry Schugam, Executive Vice President of the Baltimore Curriculum



Project.

"We were delighted to have Council President Young and Major Russell join us."

We would like to thank Council President Young and Major Russell for taking the time to perform with our students.

To view videos of the play and other performances visit: www.youtube.com/baltimorecp

BCP Provides Training for Collington After-School Programs

During December 2011 and January 2012 BCP provided behavior management training for Elev8 Baltimore and Higher Achievement Program.

Both programs serve middle grades students at Collington Square School of the Arts.

BCP Director of Training Tara Anderson and BCP Director of Middle School Services Jeffrey Krick led the training sessions, which provided a basic introduction

to teaching students behavioral expectations using the CHAMPS model created by Safe & Civil Schools.

CHAMPS helps teachers design a proactive and positive classroom management plan that teaches students how to behave responsibly. All BCP teachers are trained in CHAMPS.

Staff from Elev8 and Higher Achievement participated in one joint, two-hour session and two separate two-hour, follow-up sessions.

Participants were given the opportunity to practice the types of activities and transitions that are specific to after-school programs.

We are grateful that Elev8 Baltimore and Higher Achievement Program have partnered with BCP in order to provide consistent behavioral expectations throughout the day and during the after-school hours.