

# LESSONS LEARNED

Making Students Smarter  
in  
BALTIMORE

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# Baltimore City

2006

83,000 students

180 Schools

70% Free Lunch

61% Graduation Rate

Baltimore has 6<sup>th</sup> highest jobless rate  
for out of school youth (16-19)

# What Works!

- RIGOR
- RELEVANCE
- RELATIONSHIPS

# RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

- Stop watering down curriculum
- Inspect what you expect
- Culture of getting smart vs. innate ability
- Teach students to read before 4<sup>th</sup> grade
- Think critically
- Problem-solve
- Do homework in school
- Align After-School Programs with Curriculum

# RELEVANCE

- Teach students by applying teaching to real life/real world experiences
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Check for understanding/encourage questions
- Internships
- Project based instruction
- Technology
- Transition to Post Secondary

# RELATIONSHIPS

- Significant adult in child's life
- Mentoring works
- Teach students to communicate
- Work independently & collaboratively
- Teach writing as form of personal expression
- Sense of belongingness
- Sense of HOPE

# SUMMARY

Student-centered curriculum

High Expectations/support

Time (not all students learn at the same rate)

Opportunities for improvement

Teachers know how to teach more than one way—high quality

professional development (If you keep doing what you're doing you will keep getting what you're getting.)

Use of technology as a tool

## Ron Edmonds

“We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is important to us. We already know more than we need to know to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven’t done it so far.”