

City Springs Attendance Initiative (continued from page 5)

force for an inspiring door-knocking event in August.

City Springs and schools across the nation are participating in the *Get Schooled* Fall Attendance Challenge. The school with the greatest improvement in attendance will win a

celebrity principal for a day.

Thank you to the following organizations for their support: AARP Experience Corps, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Business Volunteers Maryland, CareFirst, Child First Authority, The Family League of Baltimore City, Living Classrooms Foundation, Success

Mentors, and University of Baltimore.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Attendance Initiative or making a donation please contact Simone Garrison at: sgarrison@childfirstauthority.org



Ready to Learn (continued from page 4)

the next generation, you have no choice but to take responsibility for your world; for the narrative that you are going to bring to the next generation.

We have a white noise of possibilities of what we can teach. We can't teach it all. Thank goodness.

We have to be selective. We have to make judgements about what it is we teach.

Kafka once said: when you read a great book, it should be like an ice ax cracking the ice inside you.

I don't think enough of our teachers have ever had the experience

of themselves being in the classroom where their teachers felt that way about great literature.

They haven't memorized. It's not a bad word. Phrases to learn by heart. They don't have within them that enormous passion for teaching the subject.

My schoolteachers in England (and I went to a state school) barely knew my first name. I mean that. We were all second names, Steiner. We all wore purple, black-and-white striped uniforms.

They didn't even like children

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very much. In fact, I know they didn't because they enjoyed beating us.

They really didn't like children, but, they loved their subject and by God we were going to learn it.

That, I think, is what's missing deeply in what we provide the next generation of teachers.

And I have to apologize to you because, as Dean, I have not figured out how to turn that one around."



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BALTIMORE CURRICULUM PROJECT'S

CLASS NOTES



FALL 2013
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READY TO TEACH: Preparing New Teachers for the Classroom LEADING MINDS

The following is a transcript of David Steiner's speech from BCP's 2013 Leading Minds Forum on September 26, 2013. View a video of the entire forum at: <http://bitly.com/leadingminds2013>



David Steiner, Dean
Hunter College
School of Education

"Finland did something and Norway didn't.

As was mentioned earlier, Finland closed most of its schools of education and opened a very small handful in its top universities.

Norway,

which was in exactly the same situation as Finland, was unable to summon the political will to do so.

Ten years later, Finland has the best education results in the world and Norway is dead in the water.

If only it were that simple, of course. The reason that Finland succeeds has far more to do with its homogeneous culture than it does with its Ed schools.

The bottom line is that schools of education were never designed to create effective teachers.

When we started the work of videotaping our student teachers at Hunter... we put little laptops in front of our permanent faculty with five minute clips of our student teachers in the classroom.

We have about 65 full-time faculty. We put them in little groups and we simply said to them: what would you say if this were your candidate?

What rapidly became clear in the embarrassment that followed was that through nobody's fault, almost none of our faculty had ever been prepared for that conversation.

They simply had undertaken a different professional contract.

They had done EDDs, often under adverse circumstances, without statistical training on deep cultural narratives with small end numbers.

Many of them hadn't actually taught in schools. They had come through an academic, quasi college of arts and sciences route.

They thought of themselves as professors who professed; who gave lectures; who graded papers; and moved the student to the next class. That's what they thought they were being brought to university to do.

That's what they were being asked to do and suddenly we woke up and said whoops, we need effective teacher preparation. We don't have the faculty to provide it.

It's a simple truth. We have no pipeline to speak of; nowhere to find these mythical faculty who will do the things we will want them to do.

The most important change we need beyond raising standards, beyond closing schools, is to find people, and that means creating a new professional pipeline.

It means completely rethinking the tenure, the retention of faculty around clinical skills and not around tiny

articles read by yourself, your mother and your best friend; but actually having some experience in preparing teachers because you are either a master teacher yourself or you have the skills to do so.

This is going to be tough, because the great, almost alluringly permanent claim of the professors in the schools of arts and sciences is very hard to overcome.

It is what is most attractive about becoming professor, namely that you are free to profess.

The idea that you're all going to have to teach out of the same textbook, because it's the one that NCTQ approved, is a pipe dream.

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Thank you to our generous Leading Minds series partner: Loyola University Maryland School of Education



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School of Education

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The idea that you are going to teach the same skills as every other school of education is a deadening idea, if you were brought up with the notion that you are going to be like your colleague in the philosophy department or the literature department. That's what you thought you were doing and it can't go on.

Where are we going to find the will to shut a thousand Ed schools? I don't know. I tried to open up the monopoly in New York State and after a lot of screaming and a lot of Race to the Top money, we managed to get one non-traditional institution approved to prepare teachers and that was the American Museum of Natural History that happens already to give Ph.D.'s. Not a great triumph on my part.

I think the bottom line is there are deeply entrenched interests in keeping these institutions open and we're not Norway. We really do entrench our interests and that's going to make this tough.

I think the second thing to say about Ed schools is that they are there because they were part of a vision of the teaching profession that wasn't much about profession.

We have forgotten that we are trying to do something that almost no one else in the world imagined doing until very recently; and that is actually educating all of our population to college and career readiness.

When we began to speak about this in Albany when I was commissioner, it's hard to believe this, but, the phrase

Class Notes

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college and career readiness as a goal for the country (we're talking about five years ago) was barely on anyone's lips.

The idea was to get people to high school graduation. That was the point. That was how we measured.

We constantly move the bar forward, as we must; but, let's not pretend that we were designing institutions to deliver on a goal that didn't exist.

We weren't and we didn't. We have moved the goal post and we don't have the institutions to play the game.

As if this weren't enough, we've got some fundamental problems, which aren't going to be solved, as Jim rightly said, by tinkering around with Ed schools.

Fundamentally we are governed by fear in this country. What are we afraid of? We're, first of all, afraid of telling the truth about our students' performance.

We lie like no other country in the world. You speak to Japanese parents about the performance of their students and they give them a C-.

You speak to American parents; they give them somewhere between a B+ and an A-.

Of course, the result is exactly the opposite. We lie. We are afraid of telling the truth.

We have a view that schooling should be fun, because the rest of life is miserable.

Most of the world believes the other way around. Schooling should be miserable, so the rest of life might be fun.

Second, we have a total fear of curriculum content. This, by the way, is why Norway and Finland - no matter that they're different on Ed schools - both do better than we do; because they actually have a view of what we should teach.

You were getting probably, as I was, a bit dizzy with all these standards. They're standards about skills. They're not standards about what

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we actually know.

I get a little tired of people talking to me about how we have to teach critical thinking. My simple question is critical thinking about what?

You can't think critically about nothing in particular. It just can't be done. Try it.

There's a lot of "can't" (I don't mean the philosopher, I mean can't) talked about 21st century learning skills and critical thinking and meta-cognitive nonsense.

Actually, you have to know something. Then you can think critically about it. And we can't get together as a country beyond about fourth grade on what we actually should know; particularly in the humanities and social sciences.

Right, it's the Civil War in New York. It's the war between the states in Washington. It's the War of Northern Aggression in Tennessee.

But that's only the beginning. We can't agree on the science standards. We can't agree on social studies standards, let alone content.

So we are afraid of telling the truth; we're afraid of content; and we're afraid of redistribution of wealth.

You have districts right next to each other in Long Island where one poor district is taxing itself four times the rate of its neighbor and bringing in one-tenth of the income to fund its schools. Fire Island last year, I think, spent over \$80,000 a year per student for public education.

Meanwhile, a few miles away, there were districts spending \$8,800; one-tenth the amount.

We have a funding system of education that is completely insane; local property taxes for a big amount of it.

I'm saying all of this because there is a tendency (and Tyack and Cuban have talked about this in their famous book, *Tinkering Toward Utopia*) of going from one extreme to another in education reform.

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WOLFE STREET ACADEMY



Mayor Rawlings-Blake Visits WSA

We would like to thank Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake for visiting Wolfe Street Academy on October 7, 2013 to congratulate students on their outstanding attendance and to talk about the 2nd annual Mayor's School Attendance Campaign: *It Takes a Baltimore Community to Raise a Child*.

Throughout the 2013 - 2014 school year, schools across the city will compete for fun and prizes. The school with the greatest improvement in attendance, as compared to the same period last year, will win exciting incentives. Incentives will benefit students, school administrators, and the community.



WSA After-School Offers Exciting Programs



Mexican Folkloric Dance Class Taught by Lina Rojas

We would like to thank the Family League of Baltimore City for renewing the \$127,000 grant to the Baltimore Curriculum Project for the Wolfe Street Academy (WSA) After-School Program.

Serving 135 students, this year's program includes science, math, nutrition, creative writing, fine arts, music, STEM, chess, jazz dance, string instruments, and radio broadcasting.

Radio Broadcasting

WLOY Loyola Radio and the Baltimore Community Radio Coalition have teamed up with WSA and Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary to launch Radio Edu, a radio broadcasting program taught by Jon Prozzi.

Jon is a WLOY alumnus who has a background in audio production, recording and is an outstanding multi-instrumentalist.

Jon has also been a tutor and educator with a focus on cognitive learning.

Destination Imagination

This year, three students from Park School will collaborate with three WSA fifth graders on a *Destination Imagination* Challenge.

Destination Imagination (DI) is the world's largest creative problem solving program for kindergarten through college-aged learners.

At the start of the season, teams choose one of seven Challenges. After weeks spent creating, developing and practicing their solutions, they go to a local tournament. Top-scoring teams advance to state or country tournaments and ultimately the Global Finals.

Robotics/STEM

On Thursdays Leah Sardone and James Hack will be teaching a Robotics/STEM class for 5th graders.

Over an 8 week period the robotics team will design, build, program and test a fully autonomous robot using LEGO MINDSTORM technology.

In December the team will participate in a regional robotics competition, where they will be judged on robot performance, presentation, and teamwork.

After-School Tutoring

The after-school tutoring program pairs medical and graduate students from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine with WSA 1st through 4th

graders. Each tutor works with a student for one hour per week to develop strong basic math and reading skills using individualized lesson plans and worksheets developed by their teachers. Over the past several years, WSA students enrolled in the tutoring program have been able to keep up with or exceed their peers in academic growth, as measured by their annual test scores.

Thank You for Volunteering

We would like to thank the following volunteers for helping to make this program a success:

- James Hack, Northrop Grumman
- Dr. Sharon Morgenthaler, Sylvan Laureate Foundation
- Silvia Patterson, Park School
- Dr. Sabita Persaud, Notre Dame of Maryland University School of Nursing
- Jonathon Prozzi, WLOY Loyola Radio
- Leah Sardone, JHU Applied Physics Laboratory



STEM Class taught by Joshua Laskin

HAMPSTEAD HILL ACADEMY

Read more Hampstead Hill Academy News at www.hha47.org



Meyerhoff Awards HHA \$15,000 Grant

We would like to thank the Joseph & Harvey Meyerhoff Family Charitable Funds for awarding Hampstead Hill Academy a grant of \$5,000 and an additional dollar for dollar challenge grant of \$10,000.

Funds will support a variety of Hampstead Hill programs including:

- Purchasing new language arts textbooks for grades K-5
- Creating a School Store to teach students entrepreneurial skills and offer incentives to students who meet high academic and behavioral standards.

- Supporting the *Leaders Go Places* program, an incentive program for top performing middle school students in scholarship, leadership and citizenship
- Providing Spanish language instruction for teachers and staff in order to strengthen parent engagement

The Joseph and Harvey Meyerhoff Family Charitable Funds (“the Funds”) are a group of Baltimore-based family foundations committed to honoring the legacy of the family’s philanthropic

vision and whose contributions have had significant impact not only on the City of Baltimore, but nationally and internationally as well.

To support the Hampstead Hill Academy Meyerhoff Challenge Grant Fund, please make your donation online at: <http://bitly.com/hhachallenge> or mail your check made payable to “Baltimore Curriculum Project” to:

Baltimore Curriculum Project
c/o HHA Challenge Grant
2707 E. Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

Chesapeake Contracting Group Awards HHA \$10,000

We would like to thank Chesapeake Contracting Group for awarding Hampstead Hill Academy a grant of \$10,000.



On October 8, 2013 Hampstead Hill students, teachers and parents participated in the ribbon cutting event for The Shops at Canton Crossing, a 326,300 square foot retail shopping center located on 3501 Boston Street.

Both the Hampstead Hill Academy Drum Line and Violin Quartet performed at the event. Hampstead Hill 7th grader Anthony Sanchez delivered remarks welcoming The Shops at Canton Crossing to the neighborhood.

Anthony shared the stage with

Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, City Councilman James Kraft, and City Council President Bernard C. “Jack” Young.

Canton Crossing is being developed and managed by BCP Investors, a partnership comprised of local developers including Mark Sapperstein of 28 Walker Development; Doug Schmidt and Neil Tucker of Chesapeake Real Estate Group; and David Strouse of Birchwood Capital Partners.

HHA Participates in NFL Play 60 Kickoff

On September 4th, 2013 students from Hampstead Hill Academy participated in the NFL PLAY 60 Youth Football Festival in Patterson Park.

They joined Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, former Ravens players Matt Stover and Kyle Richardson, and more than 850 students from the area to celebrate the start of the NFL season.

Students learned NFL FLAG drills and Heads Up Football skills from USA

Football coaches and participated in activities with players. They also learned about hydration, helmet fitting, and concussion awareness.

NFL PLAY 60 partners HOPSports, National Dairy Council and Under Armour were on-site as part of their ongoing commitment to motivate youth and families to be active.



HHA Students at the NFL Play 60 Youth Football Festival

CareFirst Partners with BCP

We are excited to announce that CareFirst has formed a partnership with the Baltimore Curriculum Project through Business Volunteers Maryland.

CareFirst selected City Springs as the partnership’s first beneficiary and has since participated in a school beautification project and provided funding and volunteers for a new Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program at the school.

The *Bigs in Schools* program, which started in October, will provide mentoring for 20 fourth and fifth

graders; support the school’s attendance initiative; and strengthen the current mentoring program run by School Counselor Krista Wible.

CareFirst also recently provided a \$500 sponsorship for the Hampstead Hill Academy PTO’s annual B-Fit Fitness Festival.

We would like to thank CareFirst and Business Volunteers



CareFirst “Bigs in Schools” Mentors

Maryland for making this wonderful partnership possible.

Ravens Support Fitness & Nutrition at BCP Schools

We would like to thank the Ravens All Community Team Foundation for awarding BCP two 2013 Ravens’ Play 60 grants to support fitness and nutrition at our schools.

A grant of \$4,225 will support a new after-school nutrition program at Wolfe Street Academy. A grant of

\$3,700 will support the 2013 BCP Spring Tennis League.

The Ravens All Community Team Foundation is dedicated to improving and facilitating the healthy development of youth in Baltimore and throughout the state of Maryland.

Celebrating its seventh year,

the Play 60 Grant program was designed to encourage healthy youth activities and promote the importance of nutrition education and exercise for children.



Sylvan/Laureate Takes BCP on a “Book Adventure”



We would like to thank the Sylvan/Laureate

Foundation (SLF) and Project Director Sharon Morgenthaler for providing over \$1,000 worth of new books for

Hampstead Hill Academy and Wolfe Street Academy.

The books are part of a new Book Adventure partnership between the Sylvan/Laureate Foundation and the Baltimore Curriculum Project.

Book Adventure is a free online reading motivation program for

schools and youth programs that serve primarily low-income Baltimore City students, grades K-7. SLF supports use of Book Adventure with training and technical assistance; help with reading events; and with new books for students and schools.

Ready to Teach (continued from page 2)

Right now the idea is if Ed schools could only be made a lot better, we could somehow solve the problem of American education.

The reason we say this (and I think Jim is absolutely right) is that Ed schools are a deservedly obvious target; whereas, the other stuff I’ve talked about actually involves the rest of you.

It involves our culture; it involves our politics; it involves who we are as adults. This great mythology that

all of our social problems, all of our choices, all of our narcissism as a culture are going to come to stop at the schoolhouse door - that is equally insane. It isn’t going to happen.

Please don’t expect that if we do everything that Kate wants us to do (and we at Hunter are busy doing it. We were flattered to be the only institution with three star programs.)

We’re busy doing it. We videotape the heck out of everybody. We are

LEADING MINDS

doing IEPs for every student. We’re mapping their skills. They’re starting at zero. They’re lucky to get to three out of five.

We’re clumping our professors; making them morally and professionally responsible for the skill growth of all of our candidates.

We are building residency programs at \$60,000 per student, which is why we can’t scale it. That’s another

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issue.

We're doing all the things we should be doing. We will make a marginal impact on American education by making Ed schools better and we've got to do it. There's no question of it...

But, let's not kid ourselves. We've got a much more fundamental set of cultural, social and economic issues.

We are brilliant at nibbling around the edges of creating proxies to avoid these issues.

We have spent hundreds of millions on accountability for the teachers. Why? Because we couldn't figure out how to fire any of the bad ones. And that's a problem...

You can't not be able to fire bad teachers. So we create this enormous accountability system.

Now Finland actually did the same thing until they realized that if they had really smart teachers pushing students to work really hard, on really good material, they didn't need the accountability systems.

In fact, it was frightening teachers away. So what did they do? They disbanded it. It's over. It's not there. But accountability systems were a proxy for a political inability to fire teachers.

We test, of course massively, all the time, everything, because we don't trust anybody to tell us the truth about student performance.

And the amazing thing is we then don't trust the tests. So we actually don't trust the very things we built to overcome our distrust of ourselves.

This is insane. Our tests are the worst in the world... We have good International Baccalaureate tests, International A Levels, which are used in 120 plus countries. So what do we do, we ignore them and we spend \$380 million building our own, which are bad.

They're bad, by the way, because we're afraid of one more thing: actually exposing working-class kids to real truths about their society.

This is one place where Diane Ravitch remains right when she wrote

the book about the thought police. We have the most censored tests in the world and the only kids who suffer from the fact that our tests can't talk about death, sex, hope, fear, love... the big things, [are working-class kids,] ... because the middle class kids will get this anyway.

Working class kids won't get it because we don't test it; and if we don't test it, we don't teach it.

And so we have the most censored tests in the world, meaning we have the most censored teaching in the world, and it's bad.

In the end, I think we have a responsibility to tell the truth to each other and to our future teachers.

Our teachers are the last best hope of every one of our failures elsewhere. We put on their shoulders all the things we couldn't solve. All the fears I have talked about.

When we talk to our candidates at Hunter, we are just beginning to tell them these truths.

Yes, we will give them the best skills we know how. Yes, we will videotape the heck out of them and we will go through those tapes and show them that they shouldn't be putting their backs to students; that they go back to the student who didn't know the answer to the question and you don't let them off the hook.

And you memorize Doug Lemov's 49 skills. Actually, you can do that in a few months. And then you study the reading science and you're pretty well-prepared to teach fourth grade.

And you haven't a clue how to teach adolescents, because we haven't a clue either; but, we'll get there. We'll get better.

But let's not assume that this is just a matter of checklists for the activities of Ed schools.

This is a fundamental problem of our culture. We are afraid of each other. We are afraid of judgement of children. Afraid of the judgement of adults.

We have paralyzed our testing out of this fear. We are paralyzing our

classrooms.

And the students who suffer the most are those whose teachers themselves come out of the same schools they did; who themselves haven't had exposure to great literature, art, music, and are not; therefore, in a position to be necessarily passionate about content.

Let me close with this story... we have a large school of education; maybe about 2,700 candidates at one time.

We're putting thousands and thousands of candidates into New York City schools. It's an enormous responsibility. You do the math; the multiplier effects are scary.

But I began to force myself to look at these videotapes. And what I saw was not so much massive inability to control a classroom.

You always hear it's classroom management that's the disaster. I actually didn't see kids killing each other. There was the odd outbreak, but nothing violent.

I didn't see huge errors of method. There were some things one needed to say to some of the candidates.

I didn't even see obvious errors of fact in most of the classrooms where I could judge (social studies and ELA.)

What I saw instead was an enormous care for children; but, not an enormous care for the content.

Very interesting, in the book that Kate cited, the [Amanda] Ripley book [The Smartest Kids in the World] ... there's a quotation from a teacher in Finland, who says that she's trying to work on becoming less empathetic to her students.

I thought about that and, taken out of context, it can read a little bit negatively.

But, in fact, as you find out as you read the rest of the page, what she was saying is that she'd somehow become more involved in the students than in the material she was trying to teach.

Hannah Arendt, the great political theorist, once said that when you teach

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City Springs Attendance Initiative

City Springs has amassed an army of volunteers and partners to combat chronic absenteeism and tardiness this school year.

City Springs Principal Rhonda Richetta took a bold step to address chronic absenteeism over seven years ago when she hired Social Worker Joan Parker to focus on attendance full-time.

UB Truancy Court Program (TCP) Ms. Parker was instrumental in bringing the University of Baltimore School of Law's Truancy Court Program to the school.

Established in 2005 by the Center for Families, Children and the Courts, the TCP addresses the root causes of truant behavior and links families to needed social services or other community-based supports.

Child First Authority

Last year Child First Authority Community School Coordinator Simone Garrison formed an attendance workgroup and instituted monthly

meetings to facilitate communication among the various partners and to leverage new partnerships and resources.

AARP Experience Corps

In 2011 AARP Experience Corps began working with City Springs. This national organization engages older adult tutors to improve K-3 student literacy. This year the tutors are also focusing on improving attendance for first and second graders.

Success Mentors

Success Mentors will be focusing on attendance in grades three, four and five. Their work will include home visits to chronically absent students.

Business Volunteers Maryland

Business Volunteers' new INSPIRE program partners with schools to incentivize and educate students on the



Child First and City Springs Volunteers at Door-Knocking Event

importance of attendance.

The City Springs team of volunteers is led by Business Volunteers Maryland Manager of Business Engagement Tom Caron.

Looking Good!

City Springs' attendance rate is currently at 96%, up from last year. Surely, this can be credited to the outstanding array of school partners and resources.

Volunteers turned out in

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Students Learn Life Skills Inside the Classroom

By Maria Smith, University of Maryland School of Social Work Intern

For the second school year in a row, City Springs is providing students with the opportunity to work on skills that will prepare them not just for today and tomorrow, but for life.

Mark Tatum, an experienced abstinence educator in Washington, DC and Prince George's County Public Schools, began working with students

in grades K-8 as a Life Skills Coach this past November.

Each class is focused on character education, and is one of the many ways City Springs is working to ensure students receive a well-rounded education.

The class is more conversation-based for the younger grades, with lessons involving mapping out how to use "self-control" and "sympathy."

Students are able to have conversations about solving problems that come up in their everyday lives.

Recently, third graders worked with Mr. Tatum to find solutions for when someone calls them a name.

"Shower them with kindness"

was one of the many suggestions.

The class for the older grades is focused on similar ideals, but structured with more material and visual presentations.

One of the greatest challenges with the Life Skills classes, Mr. Tatum noted, is re-enforcing the concepts outside of the classroom.

Students have taught him over the last year to be more flexible, which can be especially important when trying to meet students where they are.

According to Mr. Tatum, his work is focused on "teaching students how to navigate life in a more positive way." But as he also shared, "It's not just a job; it is more of a mission to get more kids to buy into character education."

