Beating the Odds: Unscreanned High Schools with Significantly High Graduation Rates for Young Men of Color

My Brother’s Keeper Statewide Symposium May 31, 2019

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Building People and Organizations

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Our Purpose

Interview 10 schools and 2 districts who are outperforming New York State schools on graduation rates for All Students, and/or the subgroups for Men of Color. Include schools with significant MOC populations representing different geographic areas, degrees of need (NRC code), and varied enrollments.

The MOC subgroup for this purpose is described as Black/African American, Native American/Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latino.

Find Out:
• What are these schools/districts doing?
• How are they doing it?
• What can we learn?
Learner Goals / Our Outcomes

Today, as participants, we will:

• Identify **successful practices** that increase graduation rates for all students, with emphasis on the subgroup of Men of Color (as defined).

• Engage in **conversation with fellow practitioners** for a clear understanding of successes and barriers overcome in improving student achievement.

• Hear first hand experiences from our **distinguished panelists**.

• Identify **strategies/school design** that you will consider implementing to increase overall graduation rates, especially for Men of Color.

• Exit with a level of commitment, renewed energy and explicit understanding of what it means to **change the narrative** for our Men of Color.
Meet The Team!

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Building People and Organizations
Our Methodology…Multiple Metrics!

- Spent over 20 days in 10 schools and 2 districts (School enrollments 375 - 1675; MOC 61% to 97%)
- Interviewed Superintendents ASIs, School Leaders
- Facilitated over 35 focus groups of staff, students and families
- Researched archival data on graduation rates, Regents, attendance, SEDH
- Interviewed community providers, mentors, MBK participants
- Queried schools on their philosophy, beliefs, school design
- Visited over 100 classrooms
- Collected research based metrics with over 5000 students and 600 staff
- Compared and contrasted findings during five month investigations

NYSED and PLC Associates Partnering – Upcoming Events

Publishing: Beating The Odds Resource Guide
Slate of State-wide Webinars
Regional Workshops (Scheduled in Fall)
Presentation to all TSI/CSI Schools
Presentation to Big 5 and BOCES District Superintendents

All featuring Successful Schools graduating MOC!
This Must Change

Regional Educational Laboratory of the American Institute For Research, 2/18

African American students:
• Have less access to high-level math and science courses
• More likely to receive one or more out of school suspensions
• More likely to attend schools with higher concentrations of inexperienced teachers

As educators and policymakers we must identify potential levers that improve educational opportunities and achievement among African American students (Horowitz & Samuels, 2017).

Note: Consistent with ESSA – Every Student Succeeds Act!

Let’s Meet The Schools Beating The Odds!
The New Narrative

Old scripts must be challenged.
And we can, as the evidence is irrefutable.

Schools that have multiple factors working against them (poverty, family dynamics, changing demographics…) – are coming out on top – graduating Men of Color in record numbers and beating the odds!

Example: Saunders Trades and Technical School

Average three year graduation rate:

Men of Color: 95%
Evidence: Schoolwide versus Statewide BYMOC Graduation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCKINLEY VOC HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALLEY STREAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESTBURY HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METROPOLITAN EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALVERNE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELMONT MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROOKLYN INSTITUTE FOR LIBERAL ARTS</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTE OF TECH AT SYRACUSE CENTRAL</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAUNDERS TRADES &amp; TECH SR HIGH SCH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Provided by SED
At Your Table…

Talk with your colleagues: (10 Minutes)

1. What are you doing now to improve graduation rates, especially for MOC?

2. Handout…Discuss what you think may be the Top 5 areas that need attention.

Malverne Students At Work!
At Your Table…Top 5 That Need Attention?

1. What is the design of your school (academies, magnets, houses…)?
2. What is your philosophy/approach? Do you have clarity of vision/mission? Guiding principles/beliefs?
3. Have you built community partnerships to provide opportunities, events, internships?
5. Do you have clear and explicit goals (academic, SEDH, career/college…)?
6. Do students track their own learning and have individual goals? Scaffolds and academic supports?
7. Is your curricula guaranteed, relevant, tied to standards and culturally responsive?
8. How do students have voice and input? Leadership opportunities?
9. What are your RtI 3 Tiered interventions?
10. How do you monitor results and manage data collection? Are data cycles explicitly designed?
11. How is professional learning set up? What content? Embedded coaching? Measure impact?
12. How do you utilize PLCs or common planning time? Faculty Meetings?
13. How do you meaningfully involve families as true partners?
14. How does the school maximize and interface instructional technology?
15. Are your hiring practices connected to bringing the right people on board?
16. How does the school make interdisciplinary connections? Teacher-led learning walks?
17. What extra-curricular, after school events, sports and athletics are available?
18. Does the school offer extended courses: AP, Dual Credit, Pathways…? Students increasing participation?
19. How are you using mentoring concepts/MBK?
20. How have you addressed attendance? Chronic absenteeism?
21. How are you maximizing the role of support staff – counselors, social workers…?
22. How do administrative walkthroughs work? How is feedback delivered?
23. How do you keep your culture strong/positive? Measure it? Maintain such intensive energy and focus?
24. How is leadership (school and district) leading the charge? What are the supportive policies?
25. What are your future plans to continue on your success path?...

Reference: PLC Organizational Assessment ©      Look Forward to our Regional Workshops!
Get Ready!

10 Amazing Schools…
And if you are in the house, after we introduce each school, please stand.

We want to know: (choose 1 speaker)
In a minute or less…what is one of the most significant things you did you do to move your school in the right direction?

Elmont Honored Citizens

Sleepy Hollow…Choose To Include!
Amazing Outcomes 2017-18/Trends For BYMOC*

Brooklyn Institute For Liberal Arts 95%
Last three years: 93/85/95%

Malverne High School 96%
Jump from 13/14 89%

Westbury High School 80%
Jump from 13/14 66%

McKinley High School 77%
Jump from 13/14 62%

Sleepy Hollow High School 76%
Jump from 13/14 69%

* Provided by SED
Amazing Outcomes 2017-18/Trends For BYMOC*

Valley Stream High School 93%
Jump from 13/14 88%

Institute of Technology 76%
14/15-16/17: 81/87/81%

Metroplitan
Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School 94%
Last 3 years: 100/100/94%

Saunders Trades and Technical School 95%
Jump from 13/14: 87%

Elmont Central High School 95%
Jump from 13/14 91%

* Provided by SED
Composite Findings…Do We Have This? 1-5. Score It.

1. The Big R – Relationships – There is a reason why every school said this is #1.
   - High trust factor, treating each other as family
   - Interpersonal connections: teachers, students, administration, support staff, coaches, mentors… reciprocal respect
   - MOC talk about “relying on my brothers”
   - High social capital in place with balance of support and challenge
   - Connect with care and obvious concern – can talk “about anything”

2. Extraordinary Above and Beyond Commitment
   - Hope is not a strategy; hard work is valued and expected
   - Exceptional commitment beyond school day – attending events, activities sporting events, concerts, weekends (not necessarily with pay)
   - “Everybody in – all hands on deck” in action – staff rallies
Composite Findings

3. Visible, Available School Leadership Supported by District Leadership

• High profile leadership; continual interactions with all stakeholders, visible
• School leaders and staff convey the “ground truth” – reality based, authentic conversations and discussions
• District philosophy, policies, supports are key drivers for the schools

4. High Expectations With Comprehensive Supports

• Extensive curriculum opportunities/access - AP courses, college credit, Career Pathways: engineering, bio-med, business and communications, the arts…
• High expectations and rigor for all students, serious approach to learning
• Continual focus on being and becoming (future plans) successful
• Increased number of students enrolling in advanced coursework

5. Community Connections

• Partnerships with business, organizations provide mentoring and learning experiences
• Access: new experiences, important for students coming from high needs situation
• Local government/mayoral support/politicians/institutions sharing responsibility as a community
Composite Findings

6. Ongoing Professional Learning

- Formally (planned time – PLCs/content area teams) and informally, staff share strategies
- Often, and as needed, staff spend their own time after/before school collaborating
- Based upon students’ needs – “We plan, compare notes and do what we need to do…that includes determining our own learning needs.”

7. Targeted High Impact Instruction/Integrated Technology

- Students encouraged to work in groups, with partners
- Classrooms feature high levels of challenging questions, collective inquiry, explicit feedback, delivered intentionally for improvement
- Attention on literacy
- Students welcome feedback as relationship is in place
- Extensive infusion of technology – use as teaching/learning tool

8. Students At The Center

- Over and over, we heard from staff – “This is what we do.”; “I am just doing my job.”
- Interesting – it is the way staff does it – with rapt focus, conviction, intensity and belief
- Decision-making centers on: “Will this help our students?”
Composite Findings

9. The Right Staff – With The “Right Stuff”

• Strong instructional knowledge; staff peer pressure for pushing each other
• Willingness to “get to know” each student – staff are engaging communicators
• Selective hiring – hire right
• Willingness to “dig in”; students first, adult “creature comforts” later
• Staff dedicated and work beyond compensated time
• Unified staff, sharing “mission critical”

10. Extracurricular Clubs, Activities and Extended Day

• Many staff/students spending up to 12 hours a day after school, events, clubs, MBK
• Students and staff see this as part of their extended family
• Offerings that students find interesting allows deeper relationships
• Arts/music/drama prevalent as a source of enjoyment and expression
Composite Findings

11. Student Voice is Loud and Clear

• Staff genuinely seek students’ opinions
• Numerous student-led/driven activities and leadership opportunities
• Students identify “what they need” to learn/be successful – staff responds
• Students “check in” on each other and offer support/encouragement – academic and SEDH

12. Comprehensive Monitoring – We Know Where Each Student Is

• Academic and SEDH (spreadsheets track every student for credits, courses needed, Regents results, attendance, grades, behaviors…); early warning signs detected
• Set data cycles for review of academic/SEDH data
• SEDH - students talk/staff listens – no matter what the issue, without judgment
• Staff communicates immediately with each other around “student having bad day or issue”
• Schools believe in second chances; practice forgiveness – “It’s a new day!”
Composite Findings

13. Rigorous, Relevant, Culturally Responsive Curricula

• Connections to the “real world” and what students experience
• If students are “stuck” on an issue/incident – stay with it until the group can move on
• Intentional belief in supporting each student’s unique heritage, without bias
• Pride in our history provides grounding, contributes to self-esteem

14. Safe Schools – No Tolerance for Violence, Bullying, Risky Behaviors

• Students and staff feel safe and protected
• Students and staff follow rules/guidelines; routines are in place
• Expectations are explicit and known
• Students share with “trusted adult” if safety issue is suspected
• Embrace “newcomers” to school – students, staff, partners
• Energy and positivism are clearly evident – this is a place people “want to be”
Composite Findings

15. Parent Voice and Respectful Connection to Families

- Families (diverse definitions) trust the school to work with their students
- Schools go “beyond traditional communication vehicles” – notes, newsletters, conferences…
- Families see the school as an integral part of their lives
- School and family are on the “same page”
- Families are intentionally welcomed and warmly greeted as respected partners

16. The “No Fail” Mentality

- Multiple safety nets preventing failure – everyone is on the “look out”
- High level of student resiliency…students keep trying
- Mindset (Carol Dweck) “I am not there yet…”
- Mindfulness in action (Dr. Jeff Howard) “I am aware of my feelings and actions…”
- Comprehensive RtI Supports with detailed, timely follow-up
Composite Findings

17. The Past Is Not An Excuse; False Narratives are Deleted

- Family history, poor choices of students, generational poverty is “off the table”
- Structural and institutional racism is not tolerated
- Focus on the future – “Where do you want to be and what is our plan for getting there?”
- We become “what we talk about”
- Student self-confidence; self-image continually built through sequential successes – every day “small wins”

18. Mentoring/Role Models

- Opportunities through programs such as MBK – students and staff are able to enjoy each other in diverse experiences; “We are in this together…”
- Comradery prevails
- Students able to see success though others’ (role models) accomplishments
- Mentors can be anyone – someone who cares and is trusted
- Gatherings (MBK/Other) with mentors and role models enhance belief – “I/we can do this!”
Composite Findings

19. Obvious Promotion of a Well-Defined Culture

• Have a mantra/credo and echo it constantly
• Develop strong beliefs, values, mission, purpose, philosophy
• Celebration of awards, accomplishments, individually, as a school, district
• Environment of positivism, opportunity, effort and “daily wins” prevails

20. Shared Ownership and Accountability – “This Is Our School”

• Clear routines and expectations for behavior
• Disruptions in learning are rare
• Day starts with motivational morning message, positive greetings
• Obvious belief – “This is our school and we take care of it”
• Students appreciate being with students with similar challenges and “way of thinking”
• Distributive leadership in place – everyone has a role to move our school to continued success
More Data - How Important…1-5?

1. The way teachers teach and are available when I need help.

2. Being surrounded by students who have similar thinking and want to be successful.

3. The curriculum and its relevance to me and my future plans - college and career.

4. Safe place where people really care about me.

5. Opportunities to participate in athletics, sports, extra-curricular activities, after school and community events.

6. The positive and encouraging environment of the school with adult role models.

7. My family supporting me and saying education is important.

8. Opportunities to participate in decisions about the school, where staff "listens to us."

9. Opportunities for Advanced Placement (AP)/College Credit Courses, IB.

10. Having mentors and "people to go to" when I have problems to work through.
### Amazing…What Can We Learn?

#### All - Factors most important for my success/coming to school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>All N= 5182</th>
<th>MOC N=1823</th>
<th>Staff N=617</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The <strong>way teachers teach</strong> and are available when I need help.</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>85.4%</td>
<td>96.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Being surrounded by <strong>students who have similar thinking</strong> and want to be successful.</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The <strong>curriculum and its relevance</strong> to me and my future plans - college and career.</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Safe place where <strong>people really care</strong> about me.</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
<td><strong>72.1%</strong></td>
<td>96.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Opportunities to participate</strong> in athletics, sports, extra-curricular activities, after school and community events.</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>78.5%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The <strong>positive and encouraging environment</strong> of the school with adult role models.</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My <strong>family supporting me</strong> and saying education is important.</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Opportunities to participate in decisions about the school, where staff &quot;listens to us.&quot;</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <strong>Opportunities for Advanced Placement</strong> (AP)/College Credit Courses, IB.</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>83.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Having <strong>mentors</strong> and &quot;people to go to&quot; when I have problems to work through.</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meet Our Distinguished Panel

- Dr. Edwin Quezada, Superintendent of Schools
  Yonkers Public Schools

- Mr. Steven Mazzola, Principal, Saunders Trades and Technical
  High School

- Dr. James Hunderfund, Superintendent of Schools
  Malverne UFSD

- Mr. Steven Gilhuley, Assistant Superintendent For Curriculum
  and Instruction, Malverne UFSD

- Dr. Vincent Romano, Principal, Malverne High School

- Ms. Anne-Marie Henry-Stephens, Founding Principal
  Brooklyn Institute For Liberal Arts
Stories Tell It All... Yonkers

Introducing:

Dr. Edwin Quezada, Superintendent of Schools, Yonkers Public Schools

Mr. Steven Mazzola, Principal, Saunders Trades and Technical High School
Stories Tell It All…Yonkers

Dedicated Magnet School – 12 Majors
(Occupational, Vocational, Technical and Special Education)

US News World Report – America’s Top Schools
#443 in New York High Schools
#429 in Magnet High Schools

Saunders by the Numbers:
• Total Enrollment 1,137
• Total Minority Enrollment - 75%
• Total Economically Disadvantaged - 76%
• Class of 2019 – 96% College Acceptance
• Scholarship Total (5/31/19) $29,000,000.
Stories Tell It All... Yonkers

We Are: The Oldest Trade School in NY – 1909!

Our Design:

- 9 periods per day
- Saunders students need 28-35 credits to graduate
- 10 state certified programs with college articulations
- P TECH Cohort 1
- Senior Exit Project

How Do We Do It?

- Create a caring culture
- Everyone is an educational leader
- The leader will do whatever it takes to get the job done
- The “Buy In”
- Everyone is important, so - be a good listener
- Learn to multi-task
- Not everything is a dire emergency
Ten Years of Success

2004-2014 Cohorts 4 Year August Graduation Rate:
All Students and Young Men of Color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>Young Men of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>81.3</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>98.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stories Tell It All…BILA

Introducing:

Ms. Ann-Marie Henry-Stephens

Founding Principal
Brooklyn Institute for Liberal Arts
The BILA Way . . . If You Come, You Will Succeed

Curriculum
- Academically rigorous custom curriculum
- Leadership-instructional leaders
- Analyze data
- Literacy as the key to success across all content areas
- Inquiry-based instructional model

Teachers
- Hire strategically
- A strong professional development system
- Distributed Leadership
- Strong communication system & Transparency

Students
- Believe, Believe, Believe in their potential
- Strong social-emotional support system
- Plan for the negatives - poverty levels, etc.
- Work hard & celebrate Success

Parents
- A strong communication system
- Educate & Collaborate
- Celebrate Community
- Support
BILA Is . . .

- Hard Work
- Discipline
- Academics
- Responsibility
- Love
- Home
- Success
- Rules
- Future
Brooklyn Institute For Liberal Arts

A Small School Doing Big Things

Graduation Rates*

- SED
  - (2016) 91%
  - (2017) 92%
  - (2018) 97%
  - (Projected 2019) 93%

Ranked as one of America’s Best High Schools by US News & World Report

- 2015
- 2016
- 2017
- 2018

Average Attendance

- 93%

CFES Brilliant Pathways

School of Distinction

2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018

2018 Posse Scholarship Winner

100% college acceptance for all applicants

Graduation Rates BYMOC*

- SED
  - 93%
  - 85%
  - 95%
  - (Projected 2019) 90%
Stories Tell It All…Malverne

Introducing:

Dr. James Hunderfund, Superintendent of Schools
Malverne UFSD

Dr. Vincent Romano, Principal,
Malverne High School

Mr. Steven Gilhuley
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Stories Tell It All... Malverne

A Culture of Success

- Celebrate Success
- Opportunity For All
- Extended Learning Opportunities
- Building a Community: Relationships & Involvement
- Summer Programs & Planning
- Network of Support: Building a Family
- Analyze Data
- Professional Development & Collaboration
Stories Tell It All…Malverne

• Ranked: One of America’s “Most Challenging” High Schools by the Washington Post, 2013-2017

• College Board Advanced Placement Honor Roll, 2018, 2015, 2011

• New York State Reward School for High Progress, 2016

• MHS Featured: Karin Chenoweth’s Book, “Schools that Succeed”

• Ranked: Top 11% of Best High Schools in the Nation by US News & World Report, 2019


• Voted “Best Communities for Music Education” by The NAMM Foundation 2015-2018

• Numerous State and County Athletic Championship Teams

• The University of Albany Kids Research Study recognized Malverne HS as an “Odds-Beating” School, 2017
Stories Tell It All…Malverne

- Total Success for Every Child
- Dynamic Team Leadership
- The Power of Relationships
- Systemic Support Systems
To Our Audience: Your Questions!

“…The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it’s not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives.”

Carol S. Dweck, *Mindest: The New Psychology of Success*
From Mike Schmoker:
*The replication or adaptation of best practice still needs to be demystified. The notion that good strategies or systems do not travel well is not true. (Elmore, 2000). Almost any school could imitate or adapt the best features and techniques developed by these successful systems.*

Much depends on our willingness to engage. And time does matter. Right now, the life chances of many thousands of children hang on the actions we take.  

The Results Fieldbook, 2001

• From Jon Saphier:  
*The formula I have always found relevant for moving people toward cultural changes, and acting from a belief in effort-based ability is this:*

Say it. Organize for it. Model it. Protect it. Reward it.

See You At Our NYSED/PLC Associates, Inc.  
Upcoming Events and Regional Workshops!