

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



**My Brother's Keeper Statewide Symposium May 31, 2019**

Dr. Larry Aronstein, John Carlevatti, Karen Markoff, Penny Ciaburri

*Building People and Organizations*

New York: PO Box 130 Pittsford, New York 14534

Florida: PO Box 720 Naples, Florida, 34102

Phone: (585) 264 – 0886

[pciaburri@plcassociates.com](mailto:pciaburri@plcassociates.com) [www.plcassociates.com](http://www.plcassociates.com)

# 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!

## SED Liaison and Project Executive:

*Dr. Anael Alston*

Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Access, Equity and  
Community Engagement Services  
NYS Education Department  
89 Washington Avenue-EBA 971  
Albany, NY 12234  
(518) 486-5202

## PLC Associates Inc.:

Dr. Larry Aronstein  
John Carlevatti  
Dr. Margy Jones- Carey  
Greg Speranza  
Karen Markoff  
Penny Ciaburri, CEO, Project Lead  
[www.plcassociates.com](http://www.plcassociates.com)  
(585) 264-0886



*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!

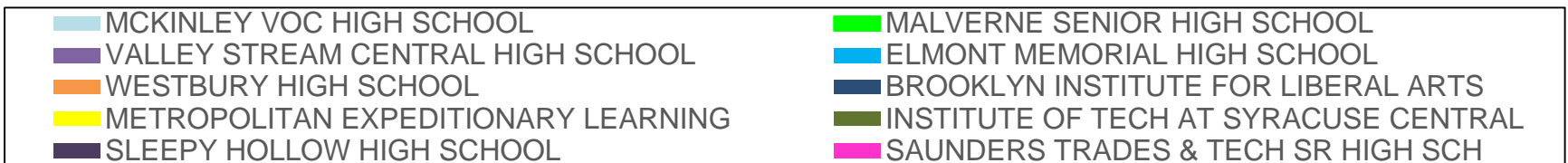
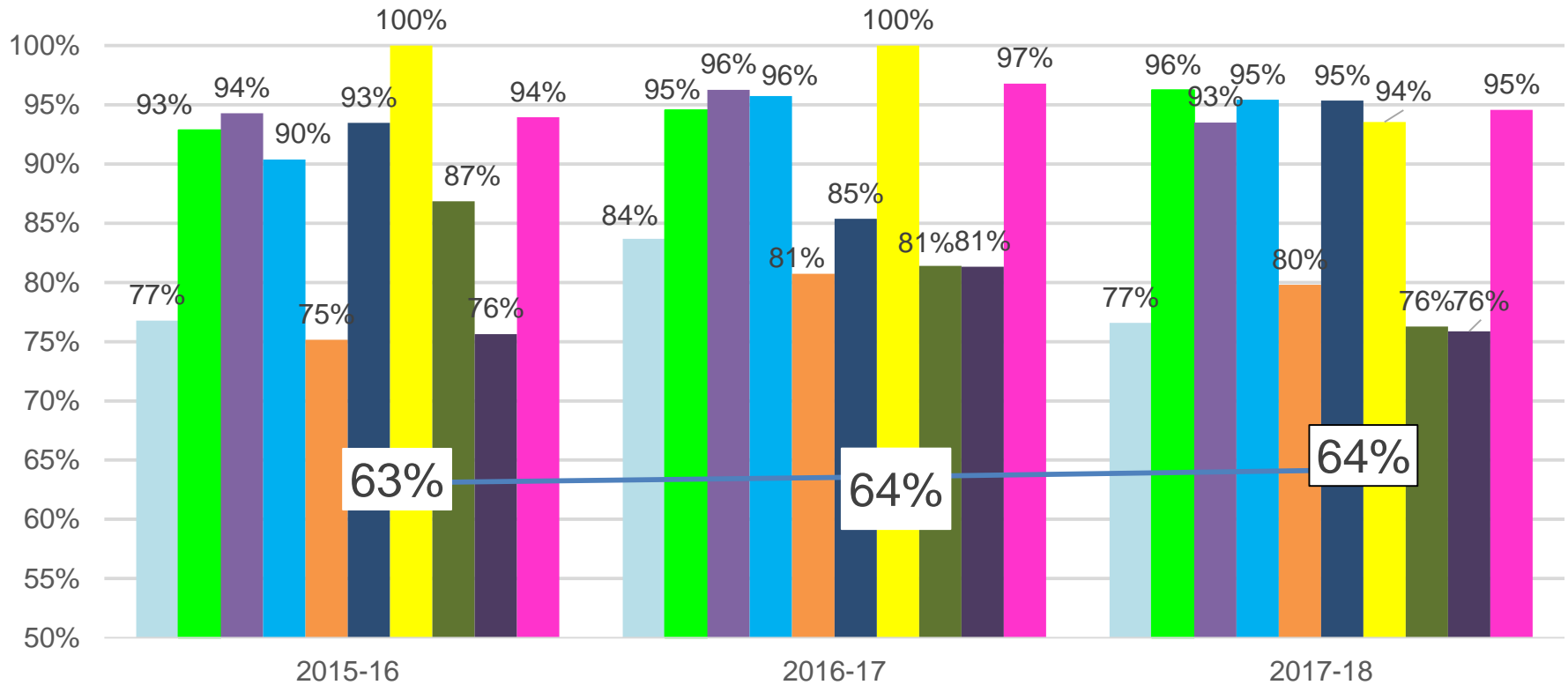
## Example: Saunders Trades and Technical School

**Average three year  
graduation rate:**

**Men of Color: 95%**



# Evidence: Schoolwide versus Statewide BYMOC Graduation\*



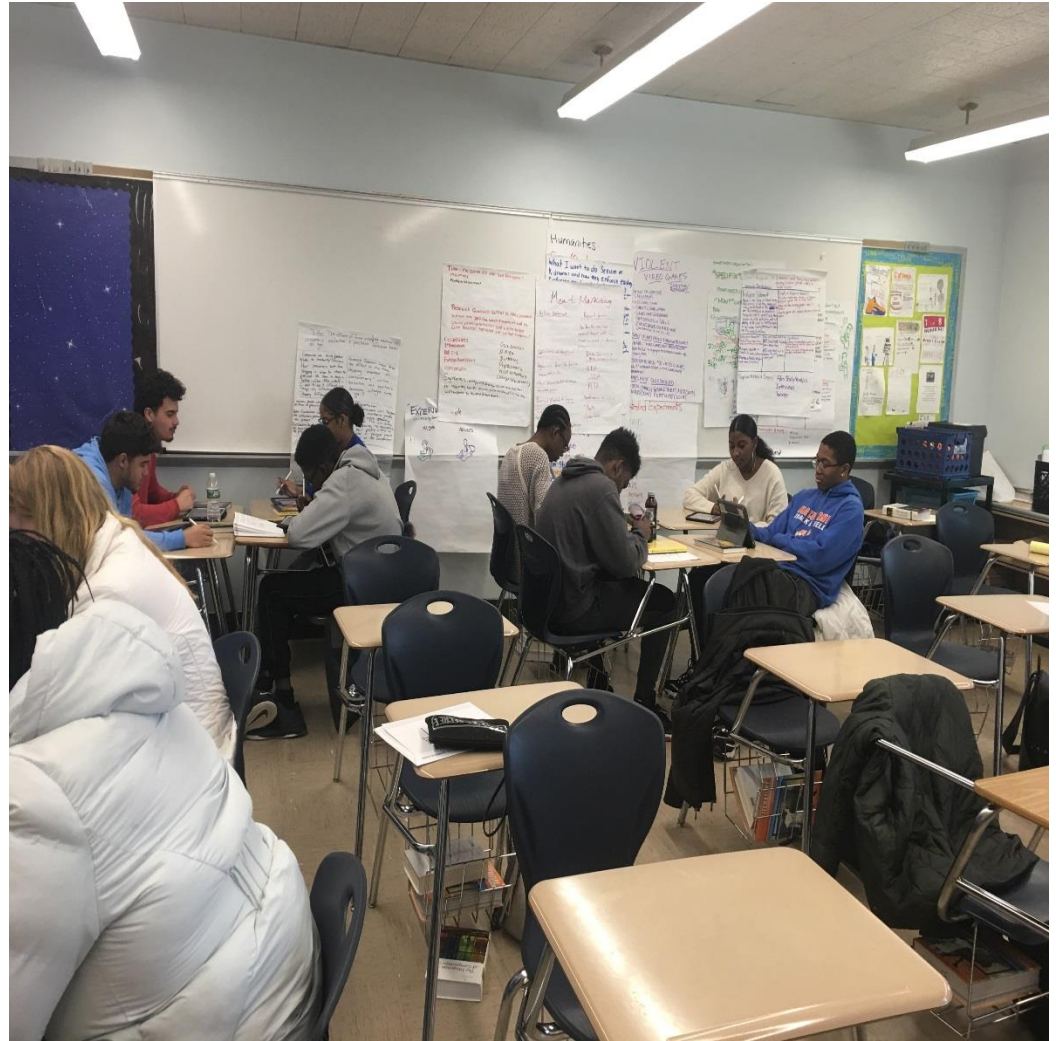
\* Provided by SED



# 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?
4. How did you build a safe school? Establish behavioral guidelines/consequences? Utilize security?
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 Rtl 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 Reginal 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\*



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



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



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



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



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

# 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%**



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



## Metropolitan

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



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

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



# 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

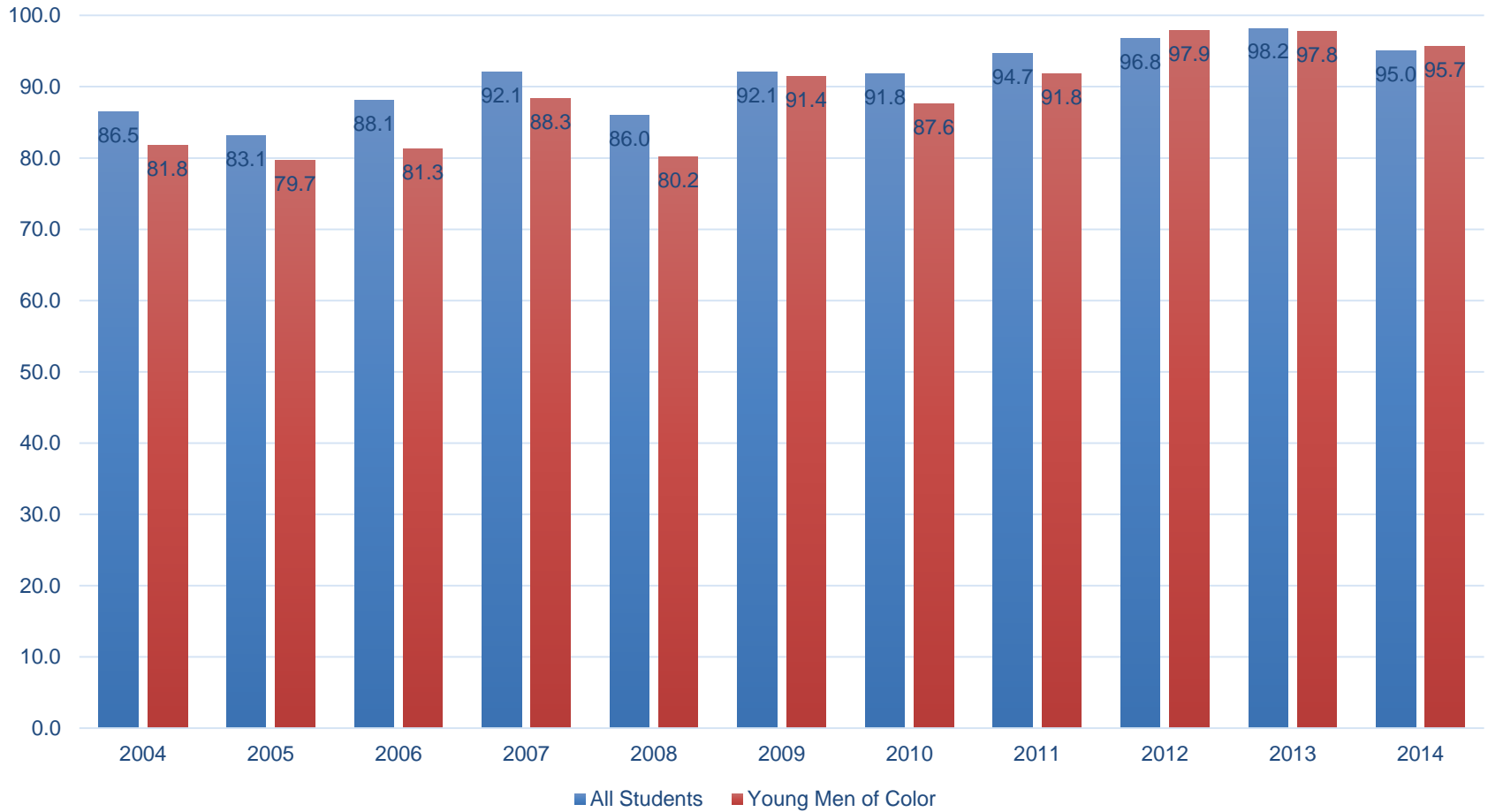
## How Do We Do It?

- 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

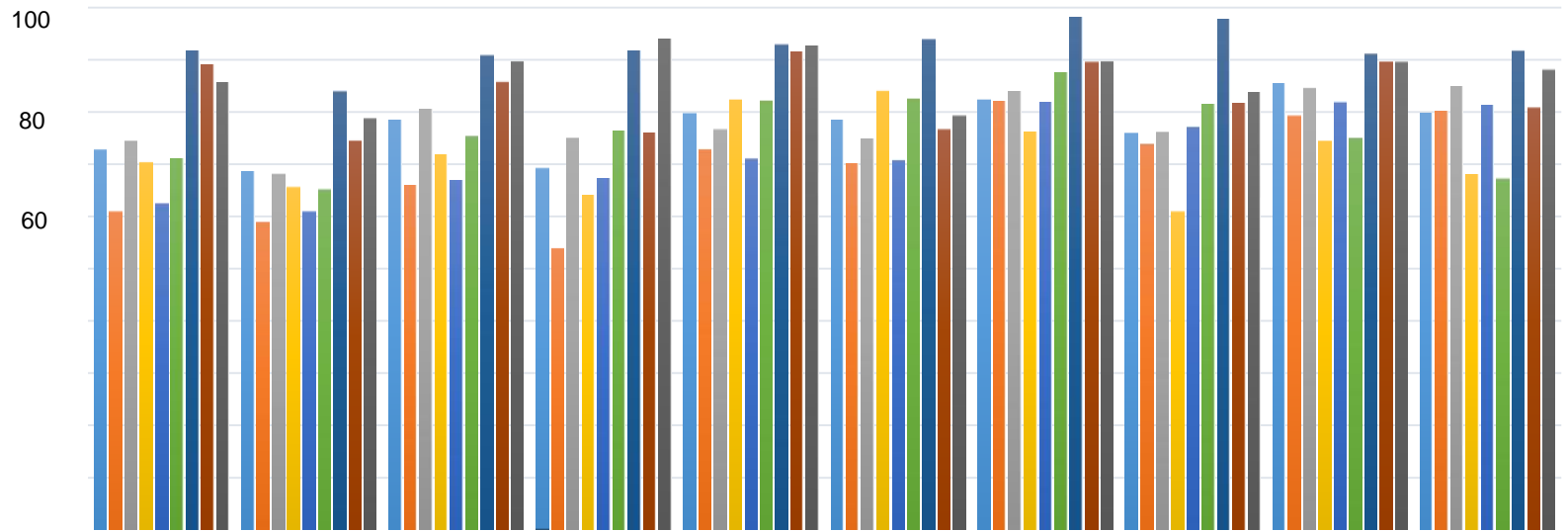


# Ten Years of Success

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



## 2010-2014 Cohorts 4 Year August Graduation Rate: All Students and MOC



	Graduation Rate for All Students	Graduation Rate for Young Men of Color	Graduation Rate for All Students	Graduation Rate for Young Men of Color	Graduation Rate for All Students	Graduation Rate for Young Men of Color	Graduation Rate for All Students	Graduation Rate for Young Men of Color	Graduation Rate for All Students	Graduation Rate for Young Men of Color
	Cohort 2010		Cohort 2011		Cohort 2012		Cohort 2013		Cohort 2014	
District	75.8	68.6	78.4	72.1	83.1	78.4	85.9	79.3	85.5	79.7
Gorton	63.4	61.4	66.0	56.1	75.9	70.1	82.1	77.2	82.6	80.2
Lincoln	77.7	70.8	80.5	78.3	79.7	74.8	83.9	79.5	88.3	85.0
Palisade Prep	73.3	68.4	71.9	64.0	85.9	87.8	76.2	63.4	77.7	68.0
Riverside H.S.	65.0	63.4	67.0	67.4	74.2	73.8	81.9	80.4	85.2	81.3
Roosevelt/ E. College	71.1	68.1	78.7	76.4	85.6	86.1	87.5	81.4	78.2	70.2
Saunders H.S.	91.8	87.6	94.7	91.8	96.8	97.9	98.2	97.8	95.0	95.7
Yonkers H.S.	89.1	77.8	89.4	76.1	91.5	79.7	93.4	81.6	93.6	84.2
Yonkers Montessori	85.7	82.1	93.5	94.1	92.6	82.6	93.5	83.8	93.4	91.8

# Stories Tell It All...BILA

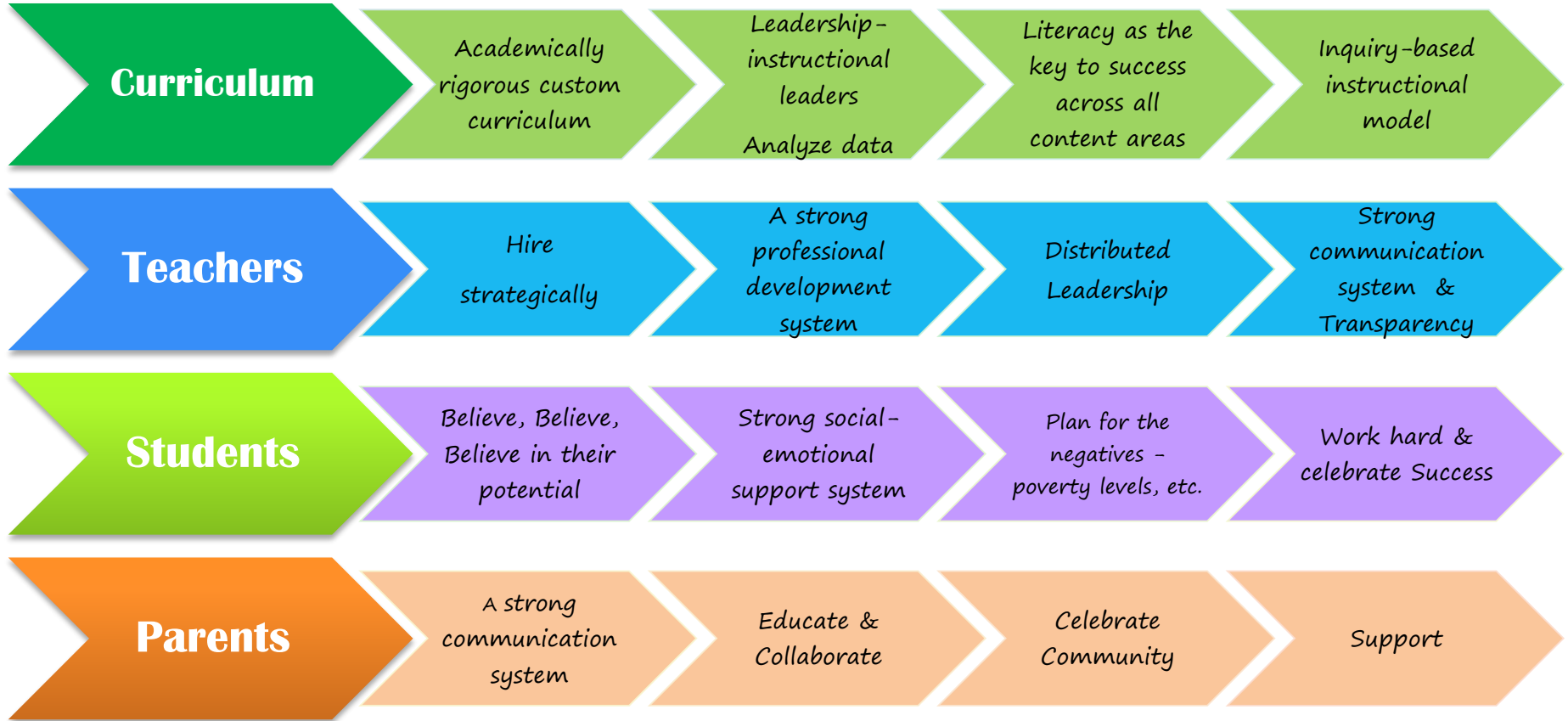


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**Ms. Ann-Marie Henry-Stephens**

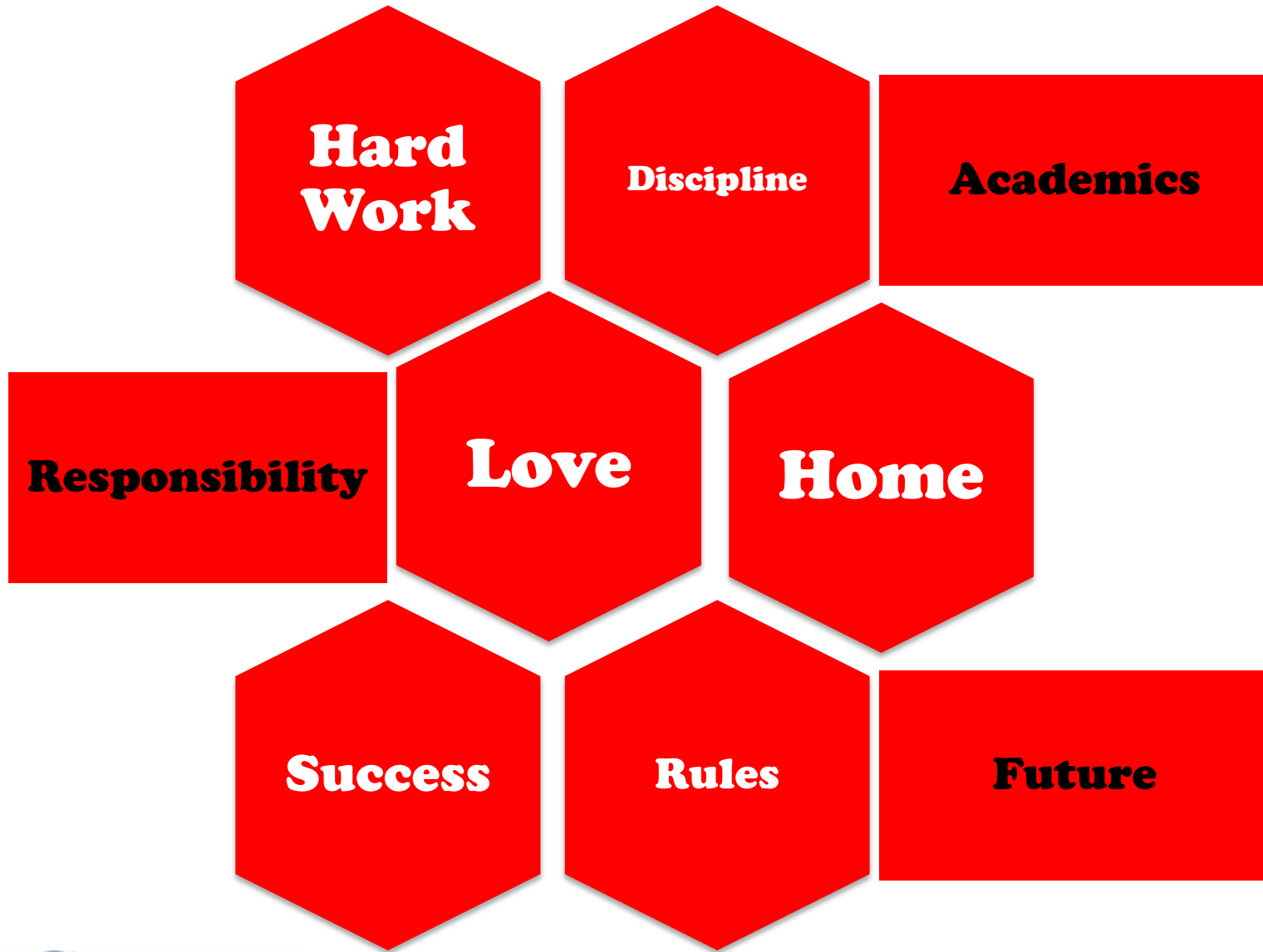
**Founding Principal  
Brooklyn Institute for Liberal Arts**

# The BILA Way . . . If You Come, You Will Succeed





# BILA Is . . .



# Brooklyn Institute For Liberal Arts

## A Small School Doing Big Things

**2018 Posse  
Scholarship  
Winner**

**Graduation Rates\*  
SED**  
(2016) 91%  
(2017) 92%  
(2018) 97%  
(Projected 2019)  
93%



**Average  
Attendance  
93%**

**100%  
college  
acceptance  
for all  
applicants**

**Ranked as one  
of America's  
Best High  
Schools by US  
News & World  
Report**  
**2015**  
**2016**  
**2017**  
**2018**

**Graduation  
Rates BYMOC\***  
**SED**  
**93%,**  
**85%**  
**95%**  
**Projected 2019**  
**(90%)**

**CFES Brilliant  
Pathways  
School of  
Distinction**  
**2014, 2015,**  
**2016, 2017,**  
**2018**

# 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



# Stories Tell It All...Malverne

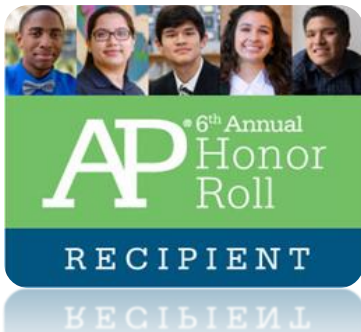
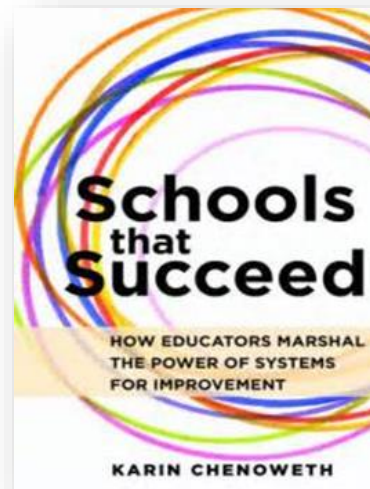
- Ranked: One of America's "Most Challenging" High Schools by the Washington Post, 2013-2017
- College Board Advanced Placement Honor Roll, 2018, 2015, 2011
- New York State Reward School for High Progress, 2016
- MHS Featured: Karin Chenoweth's Book, "*Schools that Succeed*"
- Ranked: Top 11% of Best High Schools in the Nation by US News & World Report, 2019
- The Malverne Marching Band crowned New York State Band Champions in 2018, 2011, 2010, 2006
- 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



# Stories Tell It All...Malverne



# 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



Brooklyn Institute For Liberal Arts



# Our Go Forward Mandate: Mission Critical

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!**