

Great Ideas for Great Public Schools

MARYLAND

Collaborative approach yields big gains in student achievement

Broad Acres Elementary School, the highest-poverty school in the Montgomery County, Maryland, school district, was on the verge of being taken over by the state when administrators and the Montgomery County Education Association formed a collaborative partnership in 2000. Within three years, Broad Acres had achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP). Student achievement has continued to rise—African-American fourth graders led the county in math gains in 2010. This remarkable transformation demonstrates the power of **shared leadership, high expectations, frequent monitoring of student performance, and focused professional development**. More than 90 percent of the school's students qualify for meal subsidies and three-quarters come from homes where English is not spoken. Two-thirds are Latino, 22 percent are African American, and the rest are Asian.

Rising student achievement

- In 2009, 81 percent of Broad Acres students met reading proficiency standards, up from 47 percent in 2003.
- In 2010, reading proficiency rates were about 75, 86, and 76 percent for the third, fourth, and fifth grades, respectively; math proficiency rates were about 82, 94, and 78 percent in the same grades.
- 100 percent of fourth-grade African-American students were proficient in math in 2010—the biggest improvement in math scores of any school in Montgomery County.

School staff embraces change

- In April 2001, all staff at Broad Acres were given the option of making a three-year commitment to the school and its students that entailed working the equivalent of 15 extra days (paid for by a negotiated supplement).
- Every Wednesday, the work day would be extended until 6 p.m.; the extra time would be used for planning sessions, study groups, and examining student work.
- 60 percent of the staff elected to stay.

Meaningful professional development for teachers

- The professional growth system of Montgomery County Public Schools is built on a foundation of trust between management and labor, and is centered on the same standards as National Board Certification.
- The professional growth cycle integrates the yearly evaluation with the multi-year process of professional growth.
- Each teacher is given time during the work day to participate in professional development activities.
- Standards for performance and training for evaluators and unit members are rigorous.

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Washington Post: *Can MoCo School Success Be Repeated in DC?*

http://voices.washingtonpost.com/rawfisher/2009/01/can_moco_school_success_be_rep.html



Great Public Schools for Every Student