

SPRING 2020



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# A Culture of Excellence

A Case Study of the Benjamin Banneker  
Charter Public School









Inside the media lab at the Benjamin Banneker Charter Public School in Cambridge, a paint-covered, remote controlled robot comes whizzing across the floor. Yohana, a 5th grade student, abruptly stops the robot with the iPad she’s using to control the device. “Let’s spin it and then roll at 90 degrees to spread more purple around this painting,” she says to her partner Jada. Jada then traces her finger across her iPad, shifting tiles to control the robot’s angle, speed, and duration. The robot takes off, leaving a trail of purple paint on a canvas covering the classroom floor.

Down the hallway in a brightly colored pre-kindergarten classroom, Mr. Sterlin, a Black Pre-K teacher associate, leads his group of four- and five-year-olds in their morning chant.<sup>1</sup> “My brain is powerful and I’m not afraid to use it,” the children shout in unison. Asked why he begins the morning this way, Sterlin responds, “You speak truth into the universe and it is. These kids believe they can do hard things. And they can.”

To recognize the power of a Banneker education, it’s critical to understand why the school was founded. Since the Civil Rights Era, educators have made a series of attempts to address persistent racial opportunity gaps in Massachusetts schools. These reforms, including the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, worked to address some inequalities, but progress did not

<sup>1</sup> A teacher associate is a teacher in training who reports directly to the classroom teacher. Associates assist with all aspects of teaching including direct instruction and classroom management.

benefit all students. In 1996, a group of Cambridge-area Black parents and concerned community leaders acted on the reality that their children did not have access to a rigorous, high-quality education in the traditional neighborhood public schools. Taking advantage of new charter laws, this group set out to create a school where Black children would receive a rigorous education, learn about the richness of their culture, and receive instruction from teachers who noticed and nurtured their ability.

Despite dedicated staff and a deep commitment to the school's mission, the Banneker struggled for much of its first decade. From 1998-2003, the school failed to demonstrate adequate progress in mathematics and faced corrective action by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. When 2003 state assessment results showed that only 6% of Banneker 6th graders were proficient in mathematics, the school's leadership launched an intensive, community-wide effort to improve performance. By 2006, the Banneker was making local headlines, with the Bay State Banner referring to the school's story as "a Hollywood tale of a triumphant school overcoming adversity." Despite its gains, the Banneker's 2006 performance still lagged neighboring Cambridge Public Schools. School leaders saw that their work was not nearly done.

A group of Cambridge-area Black parents and concerned community leaders acted on the reality that their children did not have access to a rigorous, high-quality education in the traditional neighborhood public schools.

Fourteen years later, the Banneker is a place where students fly drones down school corridors and first graders sing about literary characters in the library. The school ranks in the 85th percentile when compared to Massachusetts elementary schools, outperforming well-resourced schools in Boston's wealthiest suburbs. What the Banneker has accomplished is exceedingly rare. Many schools that initially turn around, moving from low to moderate performance, struggle to maintain these gains. Far fewer move from moderate performance to high performance, a level that the Banneker has achieved. The following case study explores the Banneker's improvement trajectory, focusing on the key practices that have moved the school from moderate performance to one of evolving excellence, and examining the ways that teachers and school leaders continue to innovate as student growth demands increasingly deep learning.

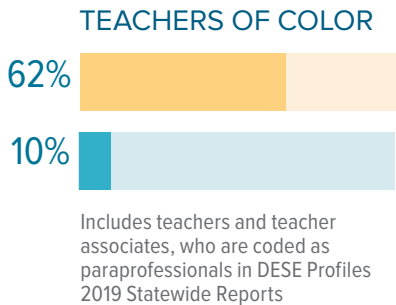
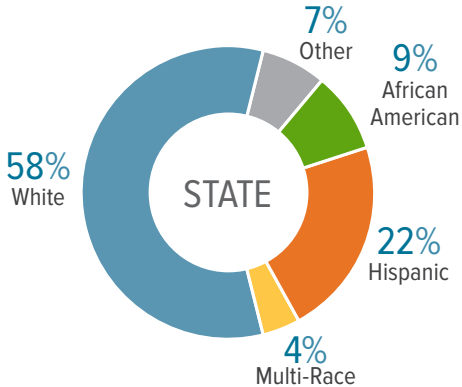
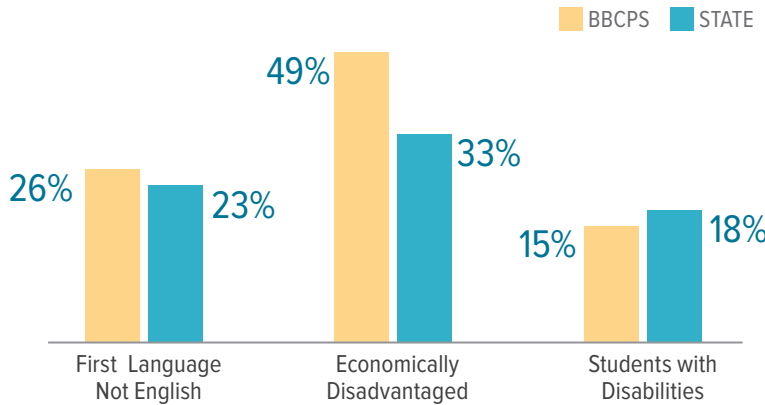
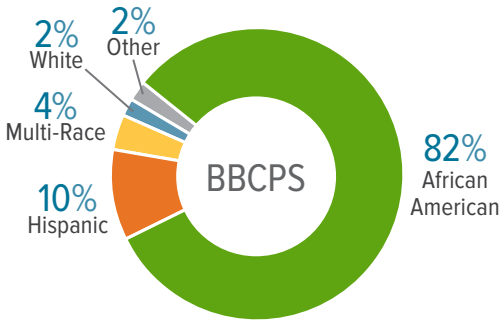
## METHODOLOGY

The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy partnered with The Boston Foundation to examine and document the school-level practices that led to transformation at the Benjamin Banneker Charter Public School, the winner of the 2019 Pozen Prize for Innovative Schools. The Rennie Center began with a review of existing literature, documenting practices that characterize sustainable school improvement. Scholarly research supported the development of a research protocol, which guided site visits at the Banneker. Information presented in this case study reflects findings from a data review, school observations, interviews, and focus groups with students, community members, teachers, and administrators at the Banneker.

## ABOUT THE POZEN PRIZE FOR INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

Since 2014, the annual Pozen Prize for Innovative Schools has recognized a Boston metropolitan area innovation, pilot, or charter school that has made significant gains in student achievement. The prize was created by Boston Foundation donors Robert and Elizabeth Pozen to honor high-performing schools that have varying degrees of autonomy over school-based decisions on teaching and learning. These autonomies allow schools to experiment with innovative models, programs, and practices. Robert is a former executive of Fidelity Investments and MFS Investment Management, who now serves as a Senior Lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management and a Senior Research Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Elizabeth is a retired psychotherapist who is now focusing on her career as a figurative artist.

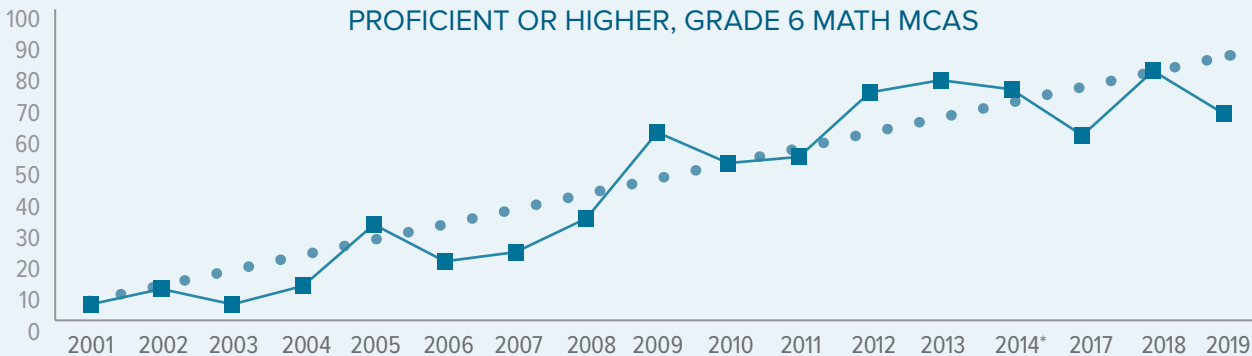
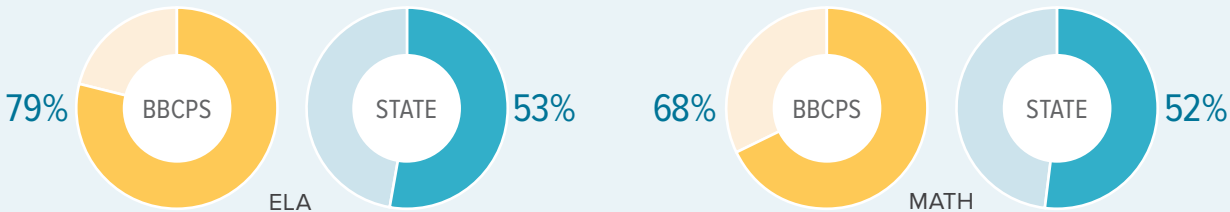
# DEMOGRAPHICS



The Banneker performs in the **85th PERCENTILE** when compared to all schools in Massachusetts.

# PERFORMANCE

## MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS, GRADE 6 MCAS



\*Please Note: The MCAS test changed to Next Generation MCAS in 2017. Data is not available for 2015 and 2016.

2018 per pupil expenditure at the Banneker was \$22,618. For comparison, 2018 per pupil expenditure for Cambridge Public Schools was \$29,520. For Boston Public Schools, this figure was \$21,904.





Lanneker Bolts

BENJAMINS B...  
Charter P...

ELECTRONIC  
With Computer Inter...  
Project #154 Fire Fan S...  
Project #156

THE UNW

## Learning from Past Reforms

Executive Director Sherley Bretous never planned to spend a 20+ year career at the Banneker. Her introduction to the school occurred when she had just graduated from Boston University and offered to help a friend set up her classroom. Walking into the building, a former Catholic school built in 1931, she saw children, parents, and teachers working together to get the newly formed Banneker school ready for its inaugural day. The sense of community and commitment to children captivated her. When a kindergarten teacher quit days before the school was set to open, the principal asked Bretous to substitute for two weeks. Bretous accepted the job and never left.

By the time she became Executive Director in 2012, Bretous had been a classroom teacher, teacher leader, curriculum director, and deputy director. Bretous' progression exposed her to needs of classrooms, teachers, and students whose strengths and challenges varied widely. She learned from the school leaders who preceded her, many of whom were her mentors. From its earliest years, the Banneker had a culture of transparency and a commitment to passing knowledge from one "generation" to the next. Bretous intentionally learned from both the successes and failures of her predecessors.

For many turnaround schools, leadership turnover is a central threat to the sustainability of school improvement.

For many turnaround schools, leadership turnover is a central threat to the sustainability of school improvement. When a new leader enters the school with a new set of priorities, educators move in rapid succession from one set of reforms to the next. With no ability to learn from previously implemented action plans, school performance often suffers. Bretous understood that innovation would be critical to continue the school's progression, but she also knew that reforms must be implemented thoughtfully.

Rather than eliminating previous reforms, she built upon the Banneker's previous initiatives and existing strengths. Between 2003 and 2006, a multi-faceted, community-wide math effort named "Math Everywhere" contributed to rapid gains in student performance. The initiative included monthly math contests, personal math goals for students and teachers, intensive teacher coaching, teacher-led data meetings, and parent workshops focused on supporting students in math. Learning from the success of this model, Bretous deepened the Banneker's focus on teacher coaching, data-driven instruction, and family engagement when she became Executive Director in 2012.





## Comprehensive Teacher Supports

Since the early 2000s, targeted instructional supports have been central to the Banneker’s improvement strategy. Given very low staff turnover, the school benefits from this investment. When teachers accept a job at the Banneker they tend to stay—average teacher tenure is over 10 years. According to Bretous, educator stability allows leaders to deepen teacher development each year rather than focusing on training new staff.

The Banneker’s current teacher development program finds its foundations in the *Math Everywhere* model of the mid-2000s and has been transformed over time from a math-specific model to one that addresses all aspects of teaching. The most recent iteration includes job-embedded teacher coaching in literacy and math, ongoing team-based observation, and quarterly data meetings in which teachers, coaches, and the Executive Director develop individualized plans for students. As one teacher noted, the constant reflection embedded in this model means that she has “never taught the same lesson the same way twice.”

## Data, Observation, and Coaching

Banneker teachers, including those who have worked at the school for over a decade, receive weekly feedback on their instructional practice. The schools’ Curriculum and Instruction Support Team (CIST), comprised of Bretous, three instructional coaches (ELA K-2, ELA 3-6, and math K-6), the director of special education, and the director of technology, selects two grade levels to observe each week. Team members visit each classroom and share their observations in *TeachPoint*, a web-based educator evaluation software. The group meets to compare findings, differentiating between teacher-specific, grade-specific,



and schoolwide areas for improvement. Instructional coaches are responsible for supporting teacher-specific areas of concern. When universal concerns emerge, the CIST team collaborates to develop professional development to address these needs. Weekly, whole-school professional development on Tuesday afternoons provides an avenue to address needs quickly and spread effective practice throughout the school. This feedback strategy ensures that teacher feedback is both timely and targeted to specific needs.

Though the Banneker’s staff development model relies heavily on internal expertise, school leaders also seek opportunities to learn from external best practices. In 2017, the CIST team launched a schoolwide focus on differentiated instruction. In order to provide the specialized data supports that teachers needed to advance their craft, school leaders sought expertise from a Black former econometrician, researcher, and corporate executive turned education reformer, Tyrone Mowatt, MBA. Mowatt was hired to serve as the school’s Executive-in-Residence, a role common in higher education, especially business schools, but very rare in the K-12 education space. Via the Executive-in-Residence role, the Banneker has flexibility to hire an expert to address a specific need for a defined period of time. Unlike a typical consultant, the Executive-in-Residence becomes a member of the school community. Mowatt partnered with school leaders to create models to analyze student-, classroom-, and school-level growth and performance data. Though using data was not new to the Banneker before Mowatt’s arrival, Bretous knew that she could serve her teachers and students better with more sophisticated analysis. This data became a central piece of the teacher support model.

Several times each year, the CIST team hosts data meetings with individual teachers. Using data, models, and predictive analytics, teachers and coaches examine each student’s progress relative to grade-level standards and prior performance. For new teachers, this intensive and frequent look at student-level progress can be intimidating. Coaches remind teachers that they share ownership of student results. “We tell them the data isn’t personal. It belongs to all of us, it’s not just on you,” ELA coach Heather Martin Sternburgh said. “If it’s great data, the teacher presents. If it’s bad data, I present it.” The result? Banneker teachers are able to adjust their instruction based on highly targeted feedback. Data meetings provide an opportunity to develop action plans to reteach content for struggling students and to identify acceleration opportunities that will challenge above-level students. With support from Mowatt, data literacy at the Banneker continues to improve, and teachers see data as a key instructional tool.

## DATA USE AT THE BANNEKER

| Assessment                                    | Subject Area                                                           | Type                         |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System | English/Language Arts<br>Mathematics<br>Science/Technology/Engineering | Standardized, computer-based |
| i-Ready Diagnostic                            | Mathematics<br>Reading                                                 | Digital                      |
| Proprietary Predictive Models                 | All                                                                    | Digital                      |
| Banneker-authored benchmarks                  | All                                                                    | Digital and paper-based      |

## A Culture of Trust and Shared Accountability

Banneker leaders recognize that the staff development model requires significant teacher reflection and can make teachers feel vulnerable. Though frank discussions about instructional practice can be difficult for teachers at first, staff believe the model works because of the high level of trust among teachers, coaches, and the Executive Director. All three instructional coaches are former Banneker educators who have worked at the school for well over a decade. Teachers and coaches share accountability for student performance. If Bretous is concerned about grade-level proficiency, classroom culture, or a classroom observation, she brings this concern to both the coach and the teacher who share ownership for resolving the concern.

After years of coaching teachers, Bretous recognizes that teachers respond best to feedback when they feel valued and supported in the school community.

She is intentional about creating an atmosphere in which every teacher is treated as a professional and there is no shame in asking for support. Bretous models this regularly, admitting when she does not know an answer or has made a mistake. She prioritizes personal relationships with every staff member. Through 1:1 meetings twice a year, Bretous meets with teachers to discuss their professional growth plans. “If a teacher needs something to be more effective it’s my job to give it to them,” Bretous said. “I will bend into a pretzel to give our teachers what they need.”

Banneker teachers refer to their school as a “family” and note that the Executive Director’s support often goes well beyond instructional feedback. When several teachers had babies over the span of a few years, Bretous recognized the challenges they faced returning to work while caring for very young children. She decided to create a daycare on the Banneker campus for the teachers’ children. For teachers, the daycare has been transformative. “I cannot explain what it means,” said 3rd grade teacher Carissa Juengst, mother of an 18-month-old boy. “My son gets to be part of what I consider to be my family. When I’m here I’m fully engaged because I have zero doubts about the safety and care of my son.” Teachers say the daycare has changed their relationships with students’ families as well. “My students’ parents have met my son,” Juengst said. “I can see the change on their faces when they realize we’re talking parent-to-parent now.” According to Bretous, the daycare is just one part of a “tight community of educators, parents, and students who consider this school their second family.”



### EFFECTIVE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT: The Banneker Model Incorporates Several Research-Based Principles<sup>1</sup>

| Content-Focused                                                            | Incorporates Coaching and Expert Support                                                      | Offers Feedback and Reflection                                                                                                       | Sustained Duration                                                           | Incorporates Active Learning                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Banneker coaching is discipline-specific in both literacy and mathematics. | Coaching is focused on the unique needs of each teacher. It is not a one-size-fits-all model. | Banneker teachers have opportunities to discuss and reflect on their teaching practice with colleagues, coaches, and school leaders. | All Banneker teachers, including veteran educators, receive weekly coaching. | Banneker teachers have ongoing opportunities to try out new strategies and reflect on this work with coaches. |





## Cultural Affirmation

On a cold evening in February, the Banneker cafeteria has been transformed into a replica of Harlem’s Apollo Theater. Sixth grader Jordan takes the stage, his tap-dancing steps in perfect synchrony with 1930s jazz legend Cab Calloway’s “Jumpin’ Jive.” He is joined on stage by two sixth grade girls trained to mimic the high-step tapping style of the Nicholas Brothers, made famous in the era of big band jazz. The audience of Banneker families, filling the cafeteria beyond its capacity, erupts with applause. At the Banneker, Black History Month is an opportunity to showcase and celebrate a year-long, curriculum-wide focus on the rich cultural history, intellectual achievements, and cultural contributions of Black academics, artists, politicians, musicians, and global leaders.

Across subjects and grade levels, the school emphasizes representation. Students see those who look like them in the content they learn and the teachers they learn from. The Executive Director and over 60% of the staff are educators of color. Many of the staff of color attended schools that did not offer them opportunities to learn about and celebrate their culture. There is a palpable passion among school staff to provide Banneker children with an experience that creates self-esteem, self-awareness, and a deep understanding of culture. Significant research shows that schools like the Banneker, with a high percentage of teachers of color, produce better outcomes for Black children. According to a 2018 Johns Hopkins University study, a Black student who has just one Black teacher by third grade is 13 percent more likely to enroll in college. With two Black teachers, the figure jumps to 32 percent. Banneker students learn from teachers who look like them every day.<sup>2</sup>

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*Johns Hopkins University  
study, 2018*

The Banneker's commitment to affirming every child means that teachers have adapted their practice based upon ethnic shifts in the student population. When the school opened in 1996, it served mainly African American and Haitian students. In recent years, growing numbers of Somalian, Ethiopian, and Dominican children have enrolled at the school. Latinx students now represent about 10% of the student body. Teachers are intentional about creating opportunities for all students to develop a healthy identity and sense of self-worth. These opportunities are visible in the books students read, the history that teachers prioritize, and the art displayed in school corridors.

The school library is filled with literature written by and about people of color. Alongside common library categorizations like geography and arts, there are shelves dedicated to well-known Black historical figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Benjamin Banneker. Librarian Jennifer Gordon has intentionally curated a library in which children will find relevance in the books they choose. The library is a rich resource for students' annual biosketch assignment in which they research and write about a historical figure who represents their culture or the ideals of inclusivity.

A focus on student identity and ancestry is also evident in classroom assignments. In a 2nd grade heritage unit, students interview their parents to learn about their family background, and teachers share their background with students. The unit concludes with a family celebration. Teachers, parents, and students prepare food representing their culture and heritage. The event celebrates the many cultures represented in the Banneker community, whose members all share a common interest in educating the next generation. Many staff and families attend the celebration dressed in traditional clothing from their country. Students refer to the heritage celebration as one of many highlights of the year.

In order to create a school community where students can discover their full selves, teachers and school leaders demonstrate authenticity in their personal and professional interactions. Mr. Stanford, a 5th grade teacher associate and graduate of historically black Tuskegee University, believes authenticity includes the opportunity to share his background, interests, and passions with students. When he became interested in the story of Bass Reeves, the first Black deputy U.S. marshal in the American West, he created a lesson to share it with his 5th grade class. When choosing books for the class, Stanford seeks characters who look and talk like his students, such as the recent favorite "Ghost" by Jason Reynolds. Often, these books provide opportunities for his 5th graders to share and discuss the real concerns in their lives, including the rampant racial discrimination that exists in society.

“Banneker is showing many of its students that excellence is not just a faraway goal but a readily attainable reality.”

*Tyrone Mowatt, Executive-in-Residence*

At a time when charter schools have been criticized for contributing to a highly segregated public education system, the Banneker's teachers resist this narrative. By welcoming and celebrating children of all races and backgrounds, the Banneker has created a school designed to meet the needs of children of color which works for the benefit of all children. For the families who choose the school, it is a welcome alternative to a K-12 education system that has long perpetuated rules and norms that prevent many children of color from reaching their potential. As Executive-in-Residence Mowatt noted, “Without a school like the Banneker, how do we train Black children to survive and thrive in a racialized society? Banneker is showing many of its students that excellence is not just a faraway goal but a readily attainable reality.”











## Building a Banneker Pipeline

In a state where 90% of educators are white and 80% are female, the Banneker’s school leaders are intentional about building a pipeline of diverse teachers. Every classroom is staffed with two teachers: a lead teacher and a teacher associate. Teacher associates typically arrive at the Banneker with no formal teaching experience, many coming straight from college. In the hiring process, leaders look for candidates who demonstrate coachability and weed out those whose goal is to “save the kids.” “It’s important to know how prospective teachers see our kids and our families,” math coach Tasheika Johnson said. “This is a proud community. We do not want saviors. We want the best future teachers we can find.” Once hired, each associate is assigned a mentor to meet with regularly for their first two years. Eighty percent of the school’s lead teachers are hired from the teacher associate position.

The school’s commitment to transferring skills, knowledge, and experience to the next generation is evident in the teacher associate program. Lead teachers recognize that today’s teacher associates are likely to become the school’s future leaders. Teachers expose associates to every aspect of teaching, including planning lessons, delivering instruction, and meeting with parents. By the time associates move into the lead teacher role, they are accustomed to frequent observation, ongoing feedback, and intensive data use. They are able to deliver instruction that resonates with students’ cultures and experiences. They recognize authentic student-teacher relationships as the foundation of effective teaching. “It comes from the leadership down,” teacher associate Mr. Smith said. “The coaches and our Executive Director, Ms. Bretous—they’re all so passionate about where they come from and the success they want for students. When new teachers see that level of passion, they try to live up to it.”

In addition to the associate position, the Banneker provides entry-level roles for community members and local college students through its afterschool program. Afterschool staff have gone on to become teacher associates and lead teachers at the school. The pipeline for each of these positions is strengthened by strong connections between the school and its community. Many afterschool staff and teacher associates find out about the school through word of mouth from friends and family. “There are so many connections between our kids, our families, and our staff,” Johnson said. “A lot of us are part of the same community that the kids are part of.” Once hired at the school, an atmosphere of inclusion and support encourages teachers to stay. “There is comfort working around other people of color,” a staff member noted. “I feel safe being who I am and saying what I feel.”

In developing the school’s future teachers, leaders focus on a core belief that a quality education is a civil right. According to literacy coach Molander Etienne, “The school attracts people who believe in the excellence of our children. Our community is focused on delivering a world-class education to students often forgotten by others.” She uses this as a reminder when pushing teachers to raise their expectations of students and to adjust their instruction to reflect these expectations. Under her leadership and that of the CIST team, MCAS ELA scores have risen to more than 20% above the state average.

“Our community is focused on delivering a world-class education to students often forgotten by others.”

*Molander Etienne, literacy coach*

## Conclusion: Looking Forward

On a recent Saturday afternoon, students and teachers visited MetroRock, a climbing gym in nearby Everett. Staring at the 60-foot rock wall in front of her, 5th grader Nia was nervous. She had never done anything like this before. With her peers and teachers cheering her on, she reached the top of the rock wall on her second try. She was quickly hooked on Banneker's outdoor program. Asked what she's most excited about this school year, she named upcoming trips to snow tube and ski in New Hampshire's White Mountains. She's never tried either but she's not nervous anymore. "When I went rock climbing, I couldn't look down. My legs were shaking. But these outdoor trips are like that," Nia said. "They're scary at first but it's not so scary once you actually try it."

As Banneker teachers and school leaders look towards the next decade of school improvement, they plan to expand students' access to opportunities that have historically been inaccessible to them. On overnight hiking trips and rock climbing adventures, students gain a sense of possibility that is difficult to instill within the four walls of a school building. Bretous hopes to create opportunities for students to travel outside the country. "I want our kids to travel somewhere they need a passport," she said. "A passport is permission to travel. Our kids will really start seeing themselves as global citizens."

In planning for the future, school leaders remain focused on their vision of a Banneker graduate. As Etienne explained, "By the time students leave the Banneker, they are academically prepared for the rigors of the best middle and high schools. More importantly, they have a strong sense of self that will allow them to succeed in—and hopefully change—the inequities in the society that awaits them." The success of the Banneker's graduates has attracted attention. Educators from local and out-of-state schools have visited to learn from the Banneker model. School leaders are quick to point out that replicating the Banneker should not be their visitors' goal.

The school's story exemplifies what many educators—particularly those in struggling schools—know to be true. There are no silver bullets in sustainable school improvement. "It took 20-plus years and a staff who were on a mission to help the children of their brothers, sisters, and community," Bretous said. "Banneker is a special place. We have grown together. And we celebrate the success and recognition. But this was a long, hard journey for many people." The Banneker is an effective school because teachers take the time to truly get to know each student—and they teach to the students they serve. It's also a school where leaders and instructional coaches take the time to know each teacher—their style, their strengths, their challenges—and they have structures that challenge each teacher to further develop their craft. The effects of the Banneker's content-focused, collaborative, and ongoing teacher-development model have been instrumental in supporting teachers to set high expectations for students—while continuously raising expectations for teaching practice. The model allows Banneker leaders and teachers to learn from the school's successes and mistakes, rather than focusing on the education reform fad of the moment.

When other schools visit, Ms. Bretous hopes that difficult, ongoing, and achievable journey to excellence is what they take away. "This push to find the secret formula of success does a disservice to many struggling school leaders and ultimately to the children they serve," Bretous said. "Good schools are often not scalable. But many of the practices these schools use, when applied in context to the on-the-ground realities faced, can help many struggling schools to leapfrog forward." The Banneker's remarkable transformation serves as one such exemplar, offering inspiration for others seeking to drive towards excellence in partnership with their community of students, families, and educators.

"By the time students leave the Banneker, they are academically prepared for the rigors of the best middle and high schools. More importantly, they have a strong sense of self that will allow them to succeed in—and hopefully change—the inequities in the society that awaits them."

*Molander Etienne, literacy coach*







## Discussion Questions

1. Given the Banneker's status as a Commonwealth charter school, founders had unique flexibility to design a school to meet the needs of the local Black community. To what extent is the Banneker's culturally affirming model possible within the context of a traditional public school? Would particular aspects of this model be more difficult than others to emulate (hiring, teacher coaching, curriculum, school culture, etc.)? Why?
2. Research shows that principal turnover threatens the sustainability of school turnaround. What can be learned about urban school leader succession planning from the Banneker's story?
3. Research shows that the impact of teacher coaching varies immensely across schools. What elements of the Banneker's model do you believe make the coaching program successful? What are the implications for other schools seeking to improve the effectiveness of teacher coaching?
4. Banneker leaders state that there are no "silver bullets" in school transformation. What are the implications of this statement for school district leaders and preparation programs seeking to support improvement in struggling schools?



## Endnotes

- 1 Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective Teacher Professional Development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
- 2 Gershenson, S., Hart, C. M. D., Lindsay, C. A., & Papageorge, N. W. (2017). *The long-run impacts of same race teachers*. Bonn, Germany: IZA Institute of Labor Economics. Discussion Paper Series.





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Research conducted and brief produced by the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

Annelise Eaton, *Lead Author, Senior Associate*

Meghan Volcy, *Researcher*

Laura Dziorny, *Chief of Staff*

Chad d'Entremont, Ph.D., *Executive Director*

Lazar Design, *Design Services*

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## About the Rennie Center

The Rennie Center's mission is to improve public education through well-informed decision-making based on deep knowledge and evidence of effective policymaking and practice. As Massachusetts' preeminent voice in public education reform, we create open spaces for educators and policymakers to consider evidence, discuss cutting-edge issues, and develop new approaches to advance student learning and achievement. Through our staunch commitment to independent, non-partisan research and constructive conversations, we work to promote an education system that provides every child with the opportunity to be successful in school and in life. For more information, please visit [www.renniecenter.org](http://www.renniecenter.org).

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