



For Immediate Release

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ICYMI: NBC News Highlights Curricula as Pillar of Baltimore Blueprint for Success

Friday, Sept. 27, 2019—An NBC News [story](#) highlights high quality curricula as a pillar of Baltimore City Public Schools CEO Sonja Santelises’ blueprint for success for 80,000 students in 172 schools and programs. After a careful evaluation, Baltimore began using [Wit & Wisdom](#)[®], an English language arts curriculum from Great Minds, for Kindergarten through Grade 8 in the 2018–2019 school year. Excerpts from the NBC News piece:

“If we don’t provide teachers with that strong foundational, rigorous, content-rich curriculum,” Santelises said, “then we are making their jobs 10, 20, a hundred times harder than it needs to be.”

Santelises committed to selecting curriculum that was rigorous, but also included content relevant to Baltimore students, grounded in the history and art of their community.

“She engaged teachers in the decision-making around curriculum adoption in a way that was as highly effective as I’ve ever seen,” (CEO of Chiefs for Change Mike) Magee said, “and she spent the time talking to teachers and to the community to really understand the concerns they would have about any big changes to content and instruction in Baltimore City Schools.”

Wit & Wisdom uses complete works of literature, carefully chosen for their knowledge-building content across a variety of subjects and cultural responsiveness to students from a wide range of backgrounds. Santelises emphasizes high quality curriculum as a lever for [equity](#) across student circumstance or zip code.

The most recent Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers test [results](#) showed increases for Baltimore students in every grade in English language arts in the number of students scoring the highest, a level 4 or 5. Students at multiple schools achieved double digit and high single digit percentage point increases in scoring a level 4 or 5.

“Schools with some of the biggest increases year over year are in some of our most historically under-served and under-resourced neighborhoods,” Dr. Santelises said in a news release. “The work we’re doing is focused on making sure every school is accelerating growth for every student.”

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About Great Minds: Great Minds provides the highest quality curricula to schools and districts nationwide, inspiring joy in teaching and learning. [Eureka Math](#) and *Wit & Wisdom* both earned top scores from independent nonprofit reviewer [EdReports.org](#). Great Minds is the only curriculum creator to have earned three Tier 1 ratings, the highest possible, from the [Louisiana Department of Education](#), highly respected for its curricular leadership. Curricula earning the Tier 1 ratings were *Wit & Wisdom*, *Eureka Math*, and [PhD Science](#)[™]. A 2016 RAND Corporation report found *Eureka Math* and its original version, EngageNY Math, to be the most widely used elementary school math curricula in the nation. [Geodes](#)[®], a library of beautifully illustrated, content-rich books with phonics practice for emerging readers, is the latest Great Minds offering to delight teachers and students. Learn more at [greatminds.org](#).