



July 13, 2010

Dear Friends of BERC:

It is with great pleasure that we announce Faith Connolly, Ph.D., as our first Executive Director of Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC). Since BERC came into existence several years ago, it has now reached a stage of development where an executive director's leadership is needed to coordinate the work of the researchers; to facilitate our partnerships; to take a lead role in fundraising; and to be a public face of our organization, facilitating dialog with many stakeholders to support our mission to conduct and disseminate long- and short-term strategic data analysis and research that informs decisions about policy and practice to improve the educational and life outcomes of children in Baltimore.

BERC grew through the financial support of the Abell Foundation, Open Society Institute-Baltimore, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Fund for Educational Excellence (in cooperation with the Stupski Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation, and the Spencer Foundation. BERC also celebrates its partnership between Johns Hopkins University (JHU), Morgan State University, the Baltimore City Public Schools, and other civic and community partners.

Faith Connolly will join the BERC team on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. She will take a lead role in communicating with the education stakeholders with whom BERC desires dialog, fundraising, day-to-day management of our research teams and partnerships, and working with our Executive Committee on shaping the future research agendas and priorities for BERC.

Faith earned her undergraduate degree from Harvard University, master's degrees from the University of Hartford and the Johns Hopkins University, and doctorate in public policy from the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Her past professional experiences include being a dropout prevention mathematics teacher, assistant to the chief of accountability for Baltimore City Public Schools (2001-2004), director of accountability for Montgomery County Public Schools (2004-2007), and more recent roles with Naviance (in the private sector) and the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Please join us in welcoming Faith. She intends to contact many Baltimore-based partners and education stakeholders during her first weeks and months on the job as BERC continues to seek ways to support the educators, families, and students of Baltimore, and also be a national leader in the field of educational research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen B. Plank".

Stephen Plank, Ph.D.  
BERC Research Co-Director  
Johns Hopkins University

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Obed Norman".

Obed Norman, Ph.D.  
BERC Research Co-Director  
Morgan State University