

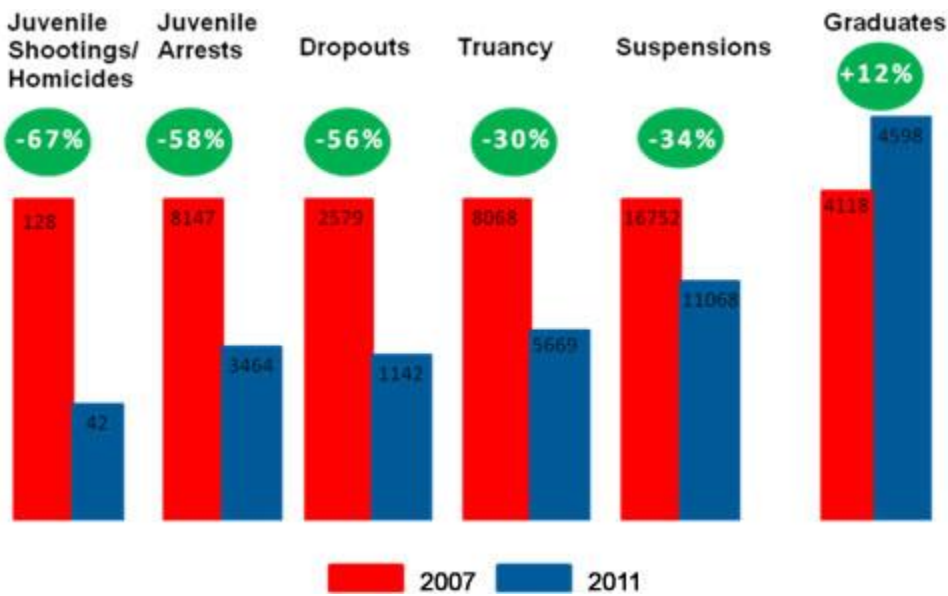
BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Monday, January 9, 2012

Dear City Schools Colleagues, Staff, Partners and Friends,

I want to share some very encouraging news for our kids and for our city. Today at City Hall, the mayor reviewed statistics that show juvenile shootings are down by 67 percent and juvenile arrests are down by 58 percent in Baltimore City from 2007 to 2011. Over this same period in Baltimore City Public Schools, dropouts are down by 56 percent, truancy is down by 30 percent and suspensions are down by 34 percent. Meanwhile, the number of students graduating from our high schools is up by 12 percent.

These numbers are all part of the same story. It is a story about real lives—the lives of our children. And it is a story that gives us tremendous hope. Our students are staying in school and graduating, not just staying out of trouble. And our African American male students are leading the way, with increases in graduation and decreases in dropouts that outpace the district as a whole.



This news is cause for thanks, celebration and rededication. It is also the result of a great deal of hard work. I want to thank Mayor Rawlings-Blake, Governor O'Malley and our many partners who have worked so closely with City Schools to realize this progress. Every day, our students benefit from strong working relationships with other agencies, including partnerships with the Baltimore City Health Department, the Baltimore City Department of Social Services, Baltimore City Police, the Department of Juvenile Services and the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office. Our community partners knock on doors to make sure students get to school every day, and to bring them back when they drop out. And every day, our dedicated school staff and parents make heroic efforts to help every student succeed.

These numbers are a testament to the unwavering commitment of so many, and I want to extend my gratitude to all of these partners. But I believe our biggest thanks, as a city, should go to our students. These numbers mean that thousands more students are taking responsibility for their futures and working to fulfill their extraordinary potential. Our children are leading the way to a better and safer city. They deserve our congratulations, encouragement and all the support we can provide.

Thank you for all that you do for our great kids and schools, and for making this progress possible.

Sincerely,

*Andrés A. Alonso, Ed.D.
CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools*

