

Debita Basu



A staff member of our education team at Maryland Public Television (MPT) met Debita Basu “by accident” at an event. They quickly became friendly and started up a conversation about education, and the rest, as they say, is history! We knew then and there that we had met a “Champion” and passionate leader in Maryland. Debita Basu currently serves as the Assistant Principal at [Thomas Johnson Elementary/Middle School](#) in Baltimore City.

The Administrator

As an administrator, her objective is to “position” children to learn. Debita tells MPT that the objective is to have the children (1) be in school, (2) attend class, (3) appreciate the opportunity to learn, and (4) be attentive.

The Nurturer

As an Assistant Principal, Debita seeks to create a nurturing environment that emphasizes forgiveness. *“One thing we know is that most young people, make mistakes. The goal should be to translate those experiences into learning opportunities as opposed to moments that generate bitterness and distrust of adults”* said Debita. She further goes on to tell MPT that this is what is meant by “Restorative Practices,” which for her, are of particular importance in urban settings.

Managing Behavior/Enhancing Outcomes

For Debita, behavior management is critical to the learning and teaching environment, and overall outcomes in the classroom. *“We know that there can be negative externalities in the classroom when one student or group of students is not paying attention, others also tend to be less attentive”* said Debita. Therefore, ongoing and attentive management of different behaviors becomes a critical component of the administrator's duties. Debita shares these helpful words of wisdom *“The only way to sustain a productive learning environment is to build trust with young people, including those who manifest the most behavioral issues.”*

Being Transparent

Debita's goal has always been transparency. She communicate with families and lets them know "why" their child needs to be in school. This trust and "transparency" builds a bond that addresses the issues that are often related to chronic absenteeism, behavioral issues and other common issues that occur in a city school setting.

Constant Communication

Constant and open communication with the families and the students is key to encouraging them to be in school. Debita conveys, *"It's investing time and having difficult conversations when needed. It's also about sustaining the relationship and wearing different hats as we play multiple roles; parent, coach, nurse....."*

**MPT is proud to recognize Mrs. Basu as an
American Graduate Champion!**

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CHAMPION

