**Science of Learning Institute**  
**Workshop Award Brief**  

### Mindfulness and Learning Research Symposium 2014

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**Issue of Interest:** How do mindfulness practices promote effective teaching and learning?

**Interdisciplinary Approach:** A growing body of research suggests that mindfulness practices — those that promote intentional cultivation of moment-by-moment non-judgmental attention and awareness — reduce psychological distress and increase attention, memory, and learning in children, youth, and adults. Despite these findings, rigorous implementation and evaluation of such interventions in schools are still extremely rare. Researchers from the Johns Hopkins Schools of Education, Medicine, and Public Health will host an interdisciplinary symposium in fall 2014 to synthesize cutting-edge scientific research and showcase what is known – and currently unknown – on mindfulness and learning. Leading scholars will address the following questions:

- **What is known about the benefits of mindfulness practices?** How do mindfulness practices—such as meditation, breathing techniques, and yoga postures—affect brain function, executive functions (e.g., attention, memory), mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression, coping), and overall well-being?

- **What do mindfulness practices look like in real-life settings?** How is mindfulness applied in educational and clinical settings to address barriers to learning? How do such practices vary across different K-12 groups and populations with special needs (e.g., at-risk, gifted students)?

- **What are the next steps in research and evaluation?** What are the most fruitful areas for future basic and applied sciences research? What challenges do researchers face in the implementation and measurement of mindfulness interventions? How can they overcome such challenges?

**Potential Implications of Workshop:** The *Mindfulness and Learning Research Symposium* will promote inquiry and collaboration among researchers across disciplines within and outside the university to advance basic and applied research in this growing field. The symposium will lay the following groundwork for substantive interdisciplinary contributions to mindfulness and learning research and result in the following products: (1) a white paper synthesizing symposium discussions and recommendations, (2) research plans for implementing and evaluating mindfulness-based strategies with different student populations in the Baltimore-Washington area, and (3) establishment of a cross-university steering committee to support continued collaboration in this area, including a feasibility assessment for the establishment of a Center for the Study of Mindfulness in Education.

**Symposium Date:** September, 2014 – projected  
**Location:** Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD  
**Registration:** Registration will open in April  
For more details, please visit:  
[http://mindfulnessandlearning.com](http://mindfulnessandlearning.com)

The symposium will include a day-long public forum followed by an invitational two-day retreat for researchers.

Registration will be limited so please register early.