

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 07-0289R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Harris, D'Adamo, Kraft, Curran, Holton, Middleton, Crider, Clarke, President Rawlings-Blake, Councilmembers Young, Spector, Welch, Reisinger, Mitchell

Introduced and read first time: April 23, 2007

Assigned to: Education Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Public School System

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Baltimore Education Network (BEN)**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting the Board of Directors of the Baltimore Education Network to share
4 with the City Council the history of BEN's work in supporting families, youth, and the
5 community in creating and implementing an agenda for improving schools in the Baltimore
6 City Public School System.

7 **Recitals**

8 The Baltimore Education Network (BEN) was established, in 1997, by parents and education
9 advocates to keep the community informed on the progress of implementation of the settlement
10 that had been reached in a lawsuit brought on behalf of a large percentage of the 102,000
11 children in the Baltimore City public school system that were falling short of meeting Maryland
12 State and community standards for academic achievement.

13 During that time, BEN, then known as the Baltimore Education Policy Network, and its
14 sponsoring organizations, the Greater Baltimore Urban League, the Baltimore City Council of
15 PTAs, the Citizens Planning and Housing Association, the Fund for Educational Excellence, the
16 Maryland Education Coalition, and others on the steering committee, formulated BEN's mission
17 of partnering students, families, youth, and the community with educators, to determine the
18 educational future of students in the public school system.

19 To accomplish its mission of supporting members of the community in creating an agenda
20 for how their schools can improve and how they can use their individual and collective power to
21 forward that agenda, BEN:

- 22
- 23 • provides access to education information,
 - 24 • enhances participants' skills through trainings and workshops, and,
 - facilitates dialogue and collective action among individuals and organizations.

25 Over the past 8 years, BEN has achieved its mission as an agent for change by nurturing
26 relationships with parents, community members, organizations, and school staff in the City and
27 across the country. The growing recognition of the organization and its committed membership
28 has led to an increased demand for the services of BEN in the areas of capacity-building

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

Council Bill 07-0289R

1 workshops, facilitation and leadership development, information dissemination, and community
2 engagement activities.

3 In sharing the story of a successful grassroots enterprise that engaged all stakeholders in the
4 academic community to produce a collective success, BEN offers the Council and the citizens of
5 Baltimore an admirable example of how individual purpose and commitment can come together
6 to form unity of purpose resulting in positive outcome.

7 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
8 Board of Directors of the Baltimore Education Network are invited to share with the City
9 Council the history of BEN’s work in supporting families, youth, and the community in creating
10 and implementing an agenda for improving schools in the Baltimore City Public School System.

11 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
12 Board of Directors of BEN, the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System, and the
13 Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.