

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 08-0068R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Rawlings-Blake, Councilmembers Young, Middleton, Curran, Cole,
Branch, D’Adamo, Kraft, Clarke, Reisinger, Henry, Welch

Introduced and read first time: September 22, 2008

Assigned to: Education Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Public School System, Police
Commissioner, Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Baltimore City Public School Teachers – Gang Related Violence Training**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System to develop
4 and implement a program for teachers to provide them with the tools to recognize gang-
5 related violence, to identify youth most at-risk for gang recruitment, and to provide the
6 necessary intervention resources and law enforcement interaction to insure the safety and
7 security of students, school personnel, and school property.

8 **Recitals**

9 Gang activity in Baltimore City has historically been attributed to local “crews” made up
10 mostly of drug dealers who typically named their organizations after their neighborhood or
11 streets. By May 2006, however, police officials acknowledged that the members of these
12 organizations were beginning to identify themselves as members of well-known gangs.

13 In June 2006, the Vice-Chair of the Mid- Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network, an
14 anti-drug summit of 300 law enforcement officers, elected officials, and educators hosted by
15 federal prosecutors in Columbia, Maryland, reported there were at least 100 gangs in Maryland.
16 The Chief of the Baltimore Police Department’s criminal intelligence unit reported that national
17 gangs had arrived in large numbers in Baltimore in the past 10 months. Between 1999 and 2005,
18 the City had a single “Bloods” and “Crips” set. At the time of the summit, the gangs had
19 increased to 14 “Bloods” and 5 “Crips” sets.

20 Council Bill 06-0241R: Informational Hearing – Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction
21 Plan, May 7, 2007, presented information from the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and
22 Prevention that 100s of gangs existed in Baltimore, including youth gangs that operated in
23 neighborhoods or schools and drug gangs: “The vast majority of youth gangs are neighborhood
24 gangs composed of 8 to 15 youth who focus their activities in a specific housing area.” Further,
25 it was found that “school gangs exist in a limited number of schools in Baltimore. These gangs
26 are school based and are responsible for robberies, assaults, and intimidation/bullying in some
27 schools. These gangs operate mainly in the school and the surrounding neighborhoods before
28 and after school.”

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

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1 While there is no definitive guide to creating a gang related violence training program for
2 teachers, the U.S. Department of Education points out some of the pitfalls of existing programs
3 in *Youth Gangs: Going Beyond the Myths to Address a Critical Problem*:

- 4 • “There is much room for the improvement in the quality of programs in some
5 straightforward ways. This includes increases in the use of practices with respect to
6 program content and methods that are found in programs that have been evaluated
7 and found to be effective. It includes increases in the intensity (duration and
8 frequency) with which programs are operated and includes increases in extent of their
9 application.”
- 10 • “A principal implication of the data on quality is that a large fraction of these
11 programs are not programmatic in the sense that they are well-developed and high-
12 quality systems of service. Quite the opposite. It appears likely that the quality of
13 prevention activity in schools might improve if it were consolidated into a smaller
14 number of higher-quality programs.”
- 15 • “Results show that secondary students who report being involved in gangs are less
16 exposed to many prevention activities than are students who are not exposed to
17 gangs. This suggests the potential for including more of the highest-risk youth by
18 actively seeking ways to include them. An analysis of the forces that limit gang-
19 involved youth from participation should be part of the planning of any gang
20 prevention or intervention program, with program design features or arrangements
21 put in place to cope with or minimize the influence of these forces.”
- 22 • “Fewer than half of gang prevention or intervention programs have been guided by a
23 formal needs assessment. Formal planning is associated with stronger programs.”
- 24 • “Formal needs assessment may contribute to (or depend on) principals’ willingness to
25 identify problems related to gangs. The finding that principals usually report that
26 gangs are not a problem even in schools with a high percentage of students reporting
27 that they participate in gangs suggests that lack of principal recognition of problems
28 may be an obstacle to the development of effective prevention and intervention
29 programs. At the very least, the results imply that principals’ reports that gang
30 activity is not a problem should be met with skepticism unless evidence from other
31 sources confirms the reports.”

32 The City Council recognizes the need to address the problem of gang related violence in our
33 city schools but does not seek to direct the CEO and staff of the Baltimore City Public School
34 System on how to best implement such a program. The expertise of our educators, along with
35 the guidelines offered by the U. S. Department of Education, can result in an effective training
36 program that will assist our teachers in protecting our children from violence and providing those
37 children with an alternative to the deathly siren call of the gangs.

38 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the CEO
39 of the Baltimore City Public School System is requested to develop and implement a program for
40 teachers to provide them with the tools to recognize gang-related violence, to identify youth
41 most at-risk for gang recruitment, and to provide the necessary intervention resources and law
42 enforcement interaction to insure the safety and security of students, school personnel, and
43 school property.

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1 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Baltimore Police Commissioner and the Executive
2 Director of the Mayor’s Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice are requested to provide their
3 assistance at the request of the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System.

4 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
5 CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System, the Baltimore Police Commissioner, the
6 Executive Director of the Mayor’s Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice, and the Mayor’s
7 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.