

CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

ANDRÉS A. ALONSO, Ed.D.  
Chief Executive Officer  
200 E. North Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

November 24, 2008

The Honorable Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
President  
Baltimore City Council  
100 Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear President Rawlings-Blake:

City Council Bill 08-227 prohibits registered sex offenders from residing within 2,000 feet of a school, child care facility, certain recreation or service facilities and where children congregate. The safety of our children is the number one priority at Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools), and we believe that this bill is a measured, necessary step in achieving that goal.

While current Maryland law does require notification of the location of offenders' residences to school authorities, City Schools favors the more specific protection offered by the restrictions included in City Council Bill 08-227. I am aware that legislation to prohibit sex offender registrants from living within a certain proximity to schools has failed to pass in previous Maryland General Assembly sessions; however, City Schools continues to support these restrictions as a legitimate protective measure for our students.

City Schools already provides as much protection as current laws allow. In training of new principals this past summer, principals were told to review the sex offender registry on a regular basis; they were also provided additional websites where offenders can be viewed. Principals are also encouraged to place copies of pages from the registry website in a binder, which should be available to anyone who wants to review it. Unfortunately, these measures do not provide the same level of protection as those embodied in City Council Bill 08-227, for which we urge passage.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq., Legislative Liaison at 410-396-8709.

Thank you for your support of City Schools.

Sincerely,

Andrés A. Alonso, Ed.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

c: Angela Gibson

