

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 07-0262R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Mitchell, D’Adamo, Harris, Curran, Young, Clarke, Branch,
Welch

Introduced and read first time: February 26, 2007

Assigned to: Education, Housing, Health, and Human Services Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Department of Finance, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners, Baltimore City Public School System

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **School Closings – Let’s Give Charter Schools a Chance to Grow**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting that the Baltimore City Public School System establish a process
4 to determine the best way to utilize closed school buildings, by giving communities the
5 option of utilizing them and providing communities the option of opening new or expanding
6 current charter schools.

7 **Recitals**

8 In Baltimore City, we are currently witnessing the closing of numerous public schools. The
9 students who attend these schools are being moved and told which other schools they should go
10 to. The problem that arises from these school closings is an interesting one. What is to be done
11 with the school buildings after they close and are vacant? It seems that it would be a waste to
12 allow the buildings to lie vacant until their use is needed. Being that we are limited in space and
13 resources, we should use these school buildings to either expand or refresh our ailing school
14 system or provide the community with some type of use agreement.

15 Once a school is closed, the building is then turned over to the City as “surplus property.” It
16 is at this point that the City has control of the property and can use it if it chooses to do so. Once
17 the City has these buildings as surplus properties, the City should investigate whether there are
18 any community uses for these now vacant buildings.

19
20 One of the first places to turn would be to the neighboring charter schools. Charter schools
21 are often growing too quickly and have nowhere to expand. In many communities these charter
22 schools must turn students away due to a lack of space. The school closings may provide the
23 opportunity for charter schools to grow, expand, and provide a quality education to far more
24 students than they currently are serving.

25 Expanding charter schools and allowing them to utilize vacant school buildings could
26 provide an opportunity to bring the schools back to the communities. With the growth of charter
27 schools come more community involvement and more community input in the education system.
28 With more community involvement comes more local teachers, more parent involvement, and a
29 more active community that put education on the forefront of the community agenda. With the
30 schools being closed and students being constantly moved and shifted, we now have the

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

Council Bill 07-0262R

1 opportunity to create educational opportunities where there were none before. We can use these
2 closed schools to continue to educate and start to bring the schools back where they belong . . .
3 the community.

4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
5 Body requests that the Baltimore City Public School System establish a process to determine the
6 best way to utilize closed school buildings by giving communities the option of utilizing them
7 and providing communities the option of opening new or expanding current charter schools.

8 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
9 Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, the Baltimore City Public School System, and
10 the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the Council.