

Leva, Anthony F (City Council)

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Summer Resources Hearing Testimony

May 1, 2025

Good evening Council President Cohen, Chairs Bullock and Conway, and members of the City Council.

My name is Ellie Mitchell. I'm the Director of the [Maryland Out of School Time Network](#), a lifelong Baltimore resident, and a parent.

Baltimore is facing a serious challenge this summer—and we're not alone. Districts across the state are struggling as ESSER funds run out. But each new cut from Washington hits our schools and nonprofits harder, pushing an already fragile system closer to crisis.

That's why I'm here tonight: to urge you to **use every resource available—and the power of partnership**—to close the gaps this summer. But short-term fixes aren't enough. Baltimore needs a North Star: a bold, shared vision for youth opportunity, developed with input from young people, city agencies, and community-based providers.

The truth is, **Baltimore has never reached scale** in after-school and summer programming. We have serious **gaps by age, neighborhood, and program type**. And too few programs have the resources to offer the **full-day, comprehensive support** that truly helps kids thrive—and that **working families rely on**.

This moment demands action. If the Mayor and City Council **set ambitious goals—and back them up with a plan** to build a **sustainable, coordinated system**—we can change the trajectory for years to come.

Close the gap this summer. Then build the system our kids deserve.

Here are some examples from other cities to serve as inspiration:

NEW ORLEANS

A master plan , a Children Youth Advisory Board, online searchable directory of programs

- <https://nolayouthmasterplan.org/>
- <https://www.nolacypb.org/>
- <https://www.youthprogramsdirectory.org>

PHILADELPHIA

Strong city system, data collection, program locator on city website

- <http://ost.phila.gov/>

DENVER

Strong city system, connected partnership -utilizes Cannabis funding

- <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Office-of-Childrens-Affairs/ProgramsInitiatives/DenverAfterschoolAlliance>

And there are more examples we can emulate! Thank you for holding this hearing - we look forward to collaborating with you to move Baltimore forward.

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