

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 06-0168R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: President Dixon, Councilmembers Mitchell, Curran, Young, Kraft, Holton,  
Rawlings Blake, Harris, Spector, Welch, Reisinger, Clarke  
Introduced and adopted: April 24, 2006

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**A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING**

**Baltimore City Public School System – Our Kids, Our Village**

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2 FOR the purpose of urging the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System, with the  
3 support of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, to forge a comprehensive  
4 plan of action to restructure the system within the 1 year grace period secured by the  
5 Baltimore City Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly to comply with reasonable  
6 State requirements; soliciting the local business and academic communities to volunteer their  
7 expertise, knowledge, and workforce to assist schools and individual students; imploring  
8 families, communities, and faith-based organizations to embrace, support, and mentor  
9 students; and calling upon the entire urban village of Baltimore to unite and to give truth and  
10 life to that old African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child.”

**Recitals**

11  
12 In 2004, when the Baltimore City Public School System was in financial crisis, the State  
13 agreed to bail out the school system with the unacceptable condition that the City surrender  
14 control of our schools. Instead of capitulating, the City took the decisive, if fiscally speculative,  
15 action of committing \$42 million from budget reserves to save our schools. The impact of a  
16 “loan” from the coffers of cash-strapped Baltimore City was a risk that would have been  
17 unnecessary had the State taken an equally brave stance and reimbursed the local educational  
18 system monies owed for continually shortchanging the Baltimore City Public School System.

19 This past 2006 session of the Maryland General Assembly, we again found ourselves at odds  
20 with the State over the City’s schools when the Maryland State Board of Education approved a  
21 plan to seize 11 of our middle and high schools by fall 2007 – the 1<sup>st</sup> takeover of its kind in the  
22 nation under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. In reaction, the Baltimore City Delegation to  
23 the Maryland General Assembly bravely ushered through legislation that would provide a 1 year  
24 moratorium against the takeover – one last chance to make good on a promise to our children of  
25 a quality education.

26 We do not have the luxury of decrying the fates that brought us to this sorry state, we cannot  
27 debate political or philosophical differences while our children suffer – a divided village cannot  
28 raise a healthy child. And there is no question that our children are not academically healthy.  
29 The one thing we can all agree on is that far too many of our children are underperforming  
30 academically, condemning them to a life that will fulfill no parent’s dream for his or her child.

31 The people of our urban village, our Baltimore, have shown how much they care about the  
32 future of our schools, our children. City residents turned out in force at the school system’s  
33 recent public forums to speak out on proposed school closings. Community members,

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

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1 neighbors, church members, parents, and grandparents all came forward to express concerns, in  
2 some cases, about schools leaving their communities and, in others, about the influx of children  
3 from other communities to their “home” schools.

4 The business community has shown its commitment to the success of our schools by offering  
5 their experience and guidance through the Greater Baltimore Committee, the Downtown  
6 Partnership, the Maryland Business Roundtable, and many other organizations. Their financial  
7 contributions and donations of computer hardware and software and manpower are helping our  
8 kids to bridge the digital divide.

9 The great academic institutions in our City have given much to our children from the very  
10 basics of providing supremely qualified teachers, to donating curriculum enrichment courses,  
11 summer school remedial and gifted courses, classroom mentors, and private tutors. To raise our  
12 children to become productive adults, Baltimore City must have the continued support of the  
13 entire community. To make up for past failings, it will, indeed, take the whole village to raise  
14 our children.

15 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this  
16 Body urges the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System, with the support of the  
17 Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, to forge a comprehensive plan of action to  
18 restructure the system within the 1 year grace period secured by the Baltimore City Delegation to  
19 the Maryland General Assembly to comply with reasonable State requirements; solicits the local  
20 business and academic communities to volunteer their expertise, knowledge, and workforce to  
21 assist schools and individual students; implores families, communities, and faith-based  
22 organizations to embrace, support, and mentor students; and calls upon the entire urban village  
23 of Baltimore to unite and to give truth and life to that old African proverb, “It takes a village to  
24 raise a child.”

25 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System  
26 is requested to make regular reports to the Baltimore City Council on the ongoing progress  
27 toward a restructuring and a resurrection of our Baltimore City Public School System.

28 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the  
29 Mayor, the Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Delegation to the 2006 Maryland General  
30 Assembly, the State Superintendent of Education, the CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, the  
31 Chair and Members of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, and the Mayor’s  
32 Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.