

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Shanaysha M. Sauls, Ph.D.
Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners

Tisha Edwards
Interim Chief Executive Officer

January 22, 2014

The Honorable Bernard C. "Jack" Young
President, Baltimore City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: Position Statement
City Council Bill 14-0306

Dear Council President Young:

On January 8, 2014, the Baltimore City Council introduced the above-captioned bill, for the purpose of prohibiting the smoking of tobacco products near playgrounds, schoolyards, and athletic facilities. Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) supports the proposed bill, because this legislative action will expand City Schools' current prohibition (*Board Rules, Article 8, Section 807.03, School Facilities, Prohibition of Smoking on School Premises*), by restricting the use of tobacco within 50 feet of the areas described. Additionally, City Schools supports this bill for the following reasons:

- Curriculum and health experts often teach resistance skills to help children learn to say "no" to offers of *alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs*. In addition, students are more likely to smoke in a location where they see other students and adults smoking.
- Children are especially sensitive to the effects of secondhand smoke. Passing by an outdoor smoking area may trigger an asthma attack, or worsen breathing problems for students and adults with certain health conditions.
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) ranks Maryland as having the highest prevalence of asthma in children and adults, compared to other states nationally.

City Schools therefore supports City Council Bill 14-0306, which we believe will benefit the children and families of Baltimore City. We will be pleased to testify regarding our support. Thank you for inviting City Schools to participate in this process.

Sincerely,



(Seal)

By: Tisha S. Edwards
Interim Chief Executive Officer

C: Dawana Sterrette, Legislative Liaison
Alice Watson, Health and Safety

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