

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 05-0100R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Dixon, Councilmembers Young, Branch, Curran, Holton, Harris,
Clarke, Kraft, Rawlings Blake, Mitchell, Reisinger, Conaway, Welch, Spector
Introduced and adopted: October 17, 2005

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

**In Support of National Teen Read Week, October 16-22, 2005 –
“Get Real @ Your Library ®!”**

FOR the purpose of endorsing National Teen Read Week and this year’s theme of “**Get Real!@
your library® !**” as the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) celebrates the
8th annual national adolescent literacy initiative that encourages teens to read for fun,
knowledge, and personal growth, and expressing appreciation to libraries, schools, and
bookstores across the country and in Baltimore City that are part of the important mission of
acquainting teens with the unbounded world of literature.

Recitals

YALSA officials are concerned that “today’s teens seem to have less and less free time, and
there are increasingly more activities for them to take part in during what little leisure time they
have. That is way it’s important to encourage teens to set aside time to read.” Literacy is a topic
of both national and local concern, and falling test scores and lower graduation rates among
today’s teens give cause for serious concern.

Last year, Baltimore City educators lauded improvements in student scoring on the Maryland
School Assessment tests when, city wide, 3rd grade reading scores went up more than 15
percentage points, 5th grade reading scores gained a less-impressive 5.5 percentage points, and 8th
grade reading scores rose by nearly 10 percentage points. There was rejoicing and
congratulations among educators when nearly 36% of Baltimore’s 10th grade readers were shown
to be at the advanced or proficient level in reading, compared to 29% the previous year.

Any celebration of teens reading improvement scores should be tempered by the converse of
the statistics – if nearly 36% of our 10th graders are advanced or proficient readers, then nearly
65% are neither advanced nor proficient – they are in fact basic readers. Basic or “unable to
adequately read or comprehend grade appropriate literature and informational passages”
describes the reading ability of the overwhelming majority of Baltimore City’s teen readers.

Studies show that regular reading habits increase reading proficiency, and one of the most
important ways teens acquire the habit is to watch adults they respect. Being around adults who
are avid readers counteracts the latest statistics from the National Center for Education Statistic’s
The Nation’s Report Card that indicate that in homes across America the number of different
types of reading materials has decreased, and that a smaller percentage of 17-year-olds saw
adults reading in their homes.

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

1 The Enoch Pratt Free Library hopes to increase teen literacy locally by offering a series of
2 programs for “Just for Teens” during Teen Read Week that include:

- 3 • **So You Want to Be a Chef** – Cooking Demo With Nick Sheridan on Monday, October
4 17, 5:30 p.m. at the Brooklyn Branch – Teens can participate in a cooking demonstration
5 with one of Baltimore’s most creative chefs to find out if being a culinary artist is your
6 cup of tea!

- 7 • **‘It’s Magic!’ For Teens** – Magic Show with Joe Oleszczuk on Monday, October 17,
8 6:30 p.m. at the Light Street Branch – A show filled with the magic of silks, ropes, cards,
9 slights of hand, laughs and more laughs for a performer of 15 years who will show how
10 magic can be turned into a career.

- 11 • **Books for the Beast** – Young Adult Literature Conference, Saturday, October 22, 9:00
12 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. at the Roland Park Country School – A biennial conference devoted to
13 showcasing and discussing the best in Young Adult Literature.

14 Parents of teens are also encouraged to celebrate Teen Read Week at home by visiting the
15 local public or school library with their teen; setting aside time each night for the family to read;
16 giving books or magazines subscriptions to teens as a gift or reward; sharing their favorite book;
17 surfing the internet with their teen to learn about new books or authors; or joining a book
18 discussion group at the school or public library.

19 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
20 Body endorses National Teen Read Week and this year’s theme of “**Get Real!@ your library®**
21 **!”** as the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) celebrates the 8th annual national
22 adolescent literacy initiative that encourages teens to read for fun, knowledge, and personal
23 growth and expresses appreciation to libraries, schools, and bookstores across the country and in
24 Baltimore City that are part of the important mission of acquainting teens with the unbounded
25 world of literature.

26 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
27 Director, Enoch Pratt Free Library, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.