

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Linda Chinnia
*Chair, Baltimore City Board
of School Commissioners*

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

City Council Resolution 21-0040R Informational Hearing – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

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Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) supports Council Resolution 21-0040R, which seeks to consider ways in which the City of Baltimore can prevent crime through the concepts utilized in the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) model. City Schools has long incorporated CPTED principles in the design of our school buildings. We hope our lessons learned as a result can help inform the efforts of potential future citywide construction projects.

CPTED uses urban and environmental design principles, with the management of both the built and natural environment, to deter criminal acts, reduce crime, promote building security, and build a sense of community. City Schools' design standards incorporate all CPTED principles within them. These principles are embedded within the design considerations and outdoor space design, and all our projects must follow our design standards.

City Schools' educational specifications integrate CPTED by name and include an extensive list of required design criteria for every school. There are four primary CPTED principles, along with four additional second generation CPTED principles. The second generation principles build on the primary principles but seek to reduce the potential motives for criminal behavior by focusing on the social aspects. These include:

1. Natural Surveillance
 - a. This principle centers around "see and be seen". For City Schools, this applies to both the interior and exterior of the school.
 - b. On the exterior, we apply this principle by providing adequate exterior lighting and installing landscaping that doesn't block sight lines.
 - c. On the interior, we minimize corridor lengths and do not permit alcoves that would allow people to "hide". We place administrative spaces throughout the building to provide oversight in the building, and we install interior glass to allow for all areas to be supervised even when unoccupied.
 - d. We also install surveillance cameras throughout the interior and exterior of all our buildings to provide active surveillance.
2. Natural Access Control
 - a. This principle centers around not only physical barriers, but also directing the flow of people to, from and around a site, while decreasing the opportunity for crime.
 - b. For our schools, on the exterior we apply this principle by installing fences, walkways, lighting and appropriate signage to clearly guide people around a site.
 - c. On the interior we zone the buildings so that public areas and "private" classroom areas can be locked down separately. We have installed a security vestibule in our newer buildings. Additionally, we minimize the number of exterior doors, and all

exterior doors must be locked for entry during daytime hours with the exception of the main entrance, where a visitor must be buzzed in.

3. Territorial Reinforcement

- a. This principle centers around creating a “sphere of influence” to enable users to develop a sense of ownership over a space through physical design.
- b. On the exterior of our schools, we embrace this principle by using landscaping and signage to delineate distinctive zones within the site, such as the play spaces and green spaces. Signage guides to the building entrance, and entry is gained through a secure vestibule space in our newer buildings. Entry to all buildings is only gained by being buzzed into the building via security camera and buzzer system. Upon entry, visitors must go through an identification check.
- c. Inside our school buildings, we zone the building for public versus private use, and within the classrooms wings the classrooms are clustered by grade band. Students can develop a sense of ownership of their cluster area, creating a zone that they can influence. The zoning of the spaces discourages outsiders from trespassing on the private space in the building, and the students’ ownership of the space discourages unwanted behaviors. Additionally, the zoning makes it easier for someone who doesn’t belong to be observed and redirected.

4. Maintenance

- a. This principle centers around an expression of ownership. The theory around this principle suggests that neglected and vandalized properties become more susceptible to additional crime.
- b. City Schools employs a robust Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS). School staff can enter a work order regarding any damage or vandalism, and maintenance staff can come out as soon as reasonably possible to repair/replace the damage. This removes or reduces the temptation for additional criminal behavior.

5. Second Generation CPTED

- a. Principles include Social Cohesion, Connectivity, Community Culture, and Threshold Capacity
- b. These principles center around creating relationships within a community and outside of the community, celebrating the culture, and encouraging safe congregation areas for young people. These principles strengthen the sense of community, as people are more likely to feel a sense of responsibility to their community.
- c. All our schools are centers of their communities and are integral with their communities. Our schools host community events and are hubs for social services. Many of our school leaders have relationships with the community associations and community leaders in their areas, along with the parents in the area. All our schools have strong partnerships with community organizations. Our newer school buildings also have community spaces built, so that there is a space where additional community services can be provided. Our school site amenities, like playgrounds and basketball courts, provide safe places for young people to be active within the community.

In addition to the principles outlined above, building hardening, while technically not a CPTED principle, is often discussed in conjunction with CPTED. Building hardening refers to efforts such as

reinforced glazing, locks, and other physical barriers. It is important to proceed with caution when using hardening methods, as too many can have the inadvertent effect of stripping a school of the calming and comforting environment that it is intended to be. However, some hardening tactics should be and are employed, such as the lock-down hardware installed throughout the building. The hardware specified and recently installed throughout the district allows for classrooms to be locked down in an emergency situation.

In summary, City Schools looks forward to continuing to use CPTED principles throughout the district in order to remove and reduce the temptation of criminal behavior. Please note that in addition to the 21st Century schools program buildings, we have also built Waverly, Holabird and Graceland Park, through the Capital Improvement Program, using CPTED principles. In addition, we have been working through a multi-year funded safety and security program for all buildings in the district (new and existing). As part of the safety grant program, we have already installed new security cameras and door hardware throughout the district.

City Schools appreciates the Baltimore City Council's attention to Council Resolution 21-0040R and looks forward to further discussions regarding the importance of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.