



HEARING NOTES

Council Bill: 25-0002

Study and Report – Absences in Baltimore City Schools

Committee: Education, Youth and Older Adults
Chaired by: Councilman John Bullock

Hearing Date: March 6, 2025
Time (Beginning): 12:11 PM
Time (Ending): 2:15 PM
Location: Council Chambers
Total Attendance: Approximately 28
Committee Members in Attendance:

John Bullock Mark Parker Sharon Green Middleton
Zac Blanchard James Torrence Jermaine Jones Odette Ramos

Bill Synopsis in the file?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Agency reports read?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Motioned by:.....	Torrence		
Seconded by:	Bullock		
Final Vote:	Fav. With Amendment		

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Holly Arnold, MTA Administrator
- Desireé Lucky, City Solicitor's Office Representative
- Aubrey Edwards-Luce, University of Baltimore School of Law

- David Heiber, CEO Concentric Educational Solutions
-

Major Issues Discussed

1. Chronic Student Absenteeism in Baltimore City Schools:

- The hearing focused on City Council Bill 25-002, requiring Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) to produce a report identifying root causes of student absences and propose solutions in collaboration with city agencies.
- Baltimore City has the highest rate of chronic absenteeism in Maryland, with 48.7% of students chronically absent in 2023-2024.

2. Transportation Challenges:

- Transportation is a key barrier to attendance, with many students relying on MTA services that are often delayed or require multiple transfers.
- Safety and reliability of public transit for students were highlighted as ongoing concerns.
- The historical lack of a comprehensive transit system in Baltimore City was discussed as a systemic issue.

3. School-Specific Strategies and Investments:

- City Schools' efforts, including attendance teams, home visits, community schools, social workers, arts and athletics programs, and peer mentoring, were shared as current interventions.
- The role of Blueprint for Maryland's Future funding in supporting interventions to reduce absenteeism.
- Data showing progress in improving attendance and academic outcomes but acknowledging continued challenges.

4. Role of MTA (Maryland Transit Administration):

- Discussions on improving bus service, bus priority lanes, better enforcement, and coordination with City Schools on bell times and route planning.

5. Partnerships and Accountability:

- Concerns about lack of centralized data collection on home visits and interventions.
 - Call for consistent metrics and contract monitoring for all partners working on attendance.
 - The need for inter-agency collaboration to address root causes beyond school walls.
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Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe.

- 1. Councilman Torrence requested better, consistent data collection on reasons for absences and outcomes of home visits, along with a commitment to establish common metrics and contract monitoring across all attendance-focused vendors and school-based teams.

Committee Vote:

J. Bullock:Yea
M. Parker:Yea
S.G. Middleton:Yea
J. Torrence:Yea
Z. Blanchard:Yea
J. Jones:Yea
O. Ramos:.....Yea

Deontre Hayes
Committee Staff: Deontre L. Hayes
Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1260

Date: March 7, 2025

**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
EDUCATION, YOUTH AND OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE
VOTING RECORD**

Council Bill#: 25-0002 DATE: March 6, 2025

TITLE: Study and Report – Absences in Baltimore City Schools

MOTION BY: Torrence SECONDED BY: Ramos

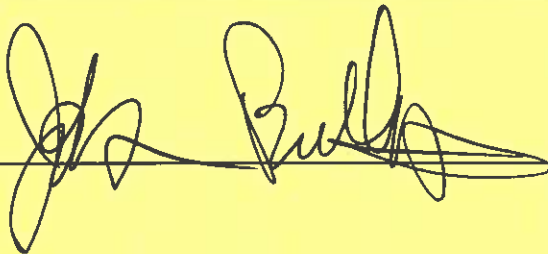
FAVORABLE

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

UNFAVORABLE

WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION

NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bullock, J.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parker, M.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middleton, S.G.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Torrence, J.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blanchard, Z.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jones, J.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ramos, O.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTALS	<u>7</u>			

CHAIR: John Bullock x 

COMMITTEE STAFF: Deontre Hayes, Initials: DLH



Baltimore City Council Committee Hearing Attendance Record

Subject: Council Bill – Study and Report – Absences in Baltimore City Schools	25-0002
Committee: Education, Youth and Older Adult	Chair: John Bullock
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025	Time: 12:00PM
Location: Council Chambers	

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY



First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email	Testify	What is your position on this bill?		Lobbyist: Are you registered in the City?*	
				For	Against	Yes	No
DAVID	Heiber	Concentric Solutions Educational dtheiber@concentriced.org					

*NOTE: IF YOU ARE COMPENSATED OR INCUR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BILL, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER WITH THE CITY ETHICS BOARD AS A LOBBYIST. REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE AND IS A SIMPLE PROCESS. FOR INFORMATION VISIT: [HTTPS://ETHICS.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/](https://ethics.baltimorecity.gov/) OR CALL: 410-396-4730



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<u>CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY</u>			Testify	For	Against	Yes	No
First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email					
Audrey	Luce Edwards-Luce	University of Baltimore School of Law CFCC AEdwardsLuce@ubalt.edu	✓	✓			✓

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City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes - Final

Education, Youth, and Older Adults Committee

Thursday, March 6, 2025

12:00 PM Du Burns Council Chamber, 4th floor, City Hall, Phone:
1-408-418-9388, Access code: 2332 045 6217, Password: Public
Link: [https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?
MTID=m68951faddbae6d94559943cfa1241d36](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?MTID=m68951faddbae6d94559943cfa1241d36)

Bill 25-0002 Study and Report - Absences in Baltimore City Schools

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 7 - John Bullock, Mark Parker, Sharon Green Middleton, James Torrence, Zac Blanchard, Jermaine Jones, and Odette Ramos

ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

[25-0002](#)

Sponsors: Mark Conway, Mark Parker, Ryan Dorsey, Sharon Green Middleton, James Torrence, John Bullock, Phylicia Porter, Zac Blanchard, Jermaine Jones, Antonio "Tony" Glover, Odette Ramos, Zeke Cohen, Paris Gray

A motion was made by Torrence, seconded by Ramos, that this Ordinance be Recommended Favorably with Amendment. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bullock, Parker, Middleton, Torrence, Blanchard, Jones, and Ramos

ADJOURNMENT