

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Mayor, City of Baltimore*

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

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Letter of Information  
**Baltimore City Council Bill 19-0451**  
**Biennial Comprehensive Crime Reduction Plan**

October 28, 2019

As drafted, Council Bill 19-0451 requires the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice to present the City Council with a biennial comprehensive crime reduction plan. The plan must be coordinated and developed in consultation with several city agencies, including the Baltimore City Public School System. The plan must analyze existing criminal justice data, assess policing practices, assess holistic efforts aimed at crime reduction, report on any public engagement measures taken or to be taken to assist in crime reduction, assess public attitudes and public education regarding criminal justice issues, and establish goals, priorities, and standards for the reduction of crime and the improvement of the administration of justice in Baltimore City.

The importance of student and staff safety for the entire City Schools community cannot be overstated. It is well-documented that childhood exposure to violence can have far-reaching, negative consequences. The National Institute of Justice notes that exposure to violence can harm a child’s emotional, psychological and even physical development. Specifically, “Children exposed to violence are more likely to have difficulty in school, abuse drugs or alcohol, act aggressively, suffer from depression or other mental health problems and engage in criminal behavior as adults.”<sup>1</sup> Research also indicates that disrupting violence is associated with positive outcomes for children.

It is in this spirit that City Schools welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice in developing its biennial comprehensive crime reduction plan. We appreciate the Baltimore City Council’s attention to this important issue and look forward to further discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/children-exposed-violence>