

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 06-0203R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Mitchell, D’Adamo, Young, Curran, Kraft, Branch, Clarke,
Conaway, Harris, Rawlings Blake, Holton, Welch, Reisinger
Introduced and adopted: August 14, 2006

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

1 Informational Hearing – Feasibility of School for Homeless and Immigrant Children

2 FOR the purpose of requesting that the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners and the
3 Office of Homeless Services report to the Council on the feasibility of instituting a school to
4 provide a novel way of assisting and educating homeless and immigrant children and
5 creating an alternative educational resource to the more conventional way of dealing with
6 these children.

7 Recitals

8 Yemin Orde was founded in 1953 by the British Friends of Youth Aliyah, in order to
9 accommodate Holocaust orphans and immigrant children during the great immigration waves of
10 the fifties. “Yemin Orde” literally means “in the memory of Orde.” The Village was named for
11 British Major General Orde Charles Wingate. Today, the 77-acre campus is home to more than
12 500 children from around the world. The children live in 20 children’s houses, each named after
13 an historical figure. The campus includes a high school offering a complete academic
14 curriculum, an art and music center a large computer center, a fully-equipped carpentry shop, a
15 central dining room, library and extensive sports facilities.

16 Yemin Orde is dedicated to giving children the highest quality care and education. Yemin
17 Orde’s success reflects the deeply sensitive approach of the Village to the needs of adolescent
18 survivors of trauma and displacement, many of whom have been separated from their family and
19 are far away from their native land and culture. With a population from around 20 different
20 countries, Yemin Orde recognizes that affirming cultural background is critical. At Yemin Orde,
21 everyone in the Village works toward integrating newcomers into Israeli life while respecting
22 and celebrating each child’s native culture. Yemin Orde Youth Village has a culture of
23 encouraging children to pursue their talents and goals and to take on positions of leadership.
24 Children are able to study in their native language until they are fluent enough in Hebrew to
25 attend classes with their peers, and extra educational opportunities are available through the
26 Village’s Learning Center Program.

27 Since its creation, Yemin Orde has occupied a unique position among youth villages.
28 Dedicated to providing the highest quality care, Yemin Orde offers three aspects of
29 programming that are unparalleled elsewhere in Israel:

- 30 ◆ Yemin Orde remains open and fully available to all students, 365 days a year. Since
31 many of its children have no other home or family in Israel, Yemin Orde never
32 closes.

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

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- 1 ◆ Yemin Orde provides a high ratio of staff to students. Counselors or "madrachim" are
2 the mentors, parent figures, and "point people" for the students. Madrichim are on
3 call 24 hours a day. Yemin Orde provides one madrich for every 24 students (the
4 state and welfare allocation provides for one madrich for every 40 youngsters).

- 5 ◆ Yemin Orde continues to assist alumni after they have left the Village. Yemin Orde
6 maintains an open door for graduates serving in the military, supports them
7 throughout their army service and provides scholarships for those attending university
8 or paraprofessional studies. It is the message that Yemin Orde is family and "will
9 always be there for you" that is most important to every child living in the village.

10 Despite the differences between the American system of schools and the one that was
11 developed in Israel after the Holocaust, we can still learn from what had been and is being done
12 across the world. There are many children in our city who are not getting the proper education
13 because they are either homeless or from immigrant families. They may not have homes from
14 which to attend school, or may simply not be able to learn on the level of the current school
15 classes that they are in. They may become discouraged by this, and be passed through the
16 system without ever really being properly educated.

17 While it may not be possible to go as far as to provide a set of services as complete as Yemin
18 Orde, we can still attempt to assist and educate these homeless or immigrant children that may
19 not be able to start on the same levels as children of their own age in our standard public school
20 system. In this alternative school, children could be placed in smaller classes based on level, not
21 age, and more special attention could be provided to help children learn a language which may
22 not be their first, or which they have not had prior formal education in. In light of the stringent
23 mandates of No Child Left Behind, wherein more and more public school systems refuse to take
24 these less advanced children on, this school could serve as a haven for there children instead of
25 merely passing them through the system, often exacerbating their problems, rather than helping
26 them become productive, educated citizens.

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
28 Body requests that the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners and the Office of
29 Homeless Services report to the Council on the feasibility of instituting a school to provide a
30 novel way of assisting and educating homeless and immigrant children and creating an
31 alternative educational resource to the more conventional way of dealing with these children.

32 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
33 Office of Homeless Services, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, and the
34 Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Council.