

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 18-0082R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Costello, Schleifer, Scott, Burnett, Dorsey,
Bullock, Middleton, Stokes, Sneed, Reisinger, Cohen, Pinkett, Henry, Clarke

Introduced and read first time: April 30, 2018

Assigned to: Budget and Appropriations Committee

Committee Report: Favorable

Adopted: May 14, 2018

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Investigative Hearing – Baltimore City Public Schools Enrollment Task Force

FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools to appear before the City Council to discuss the goals and membership of their enrollment task force and how the task force fits into a broader effort to engage the community to reverse declining enrollment in our school system.

Recitals

According to recent press reports, a 22 member Baltimore City Public Schools task force has been meeting since last year to study the declining enrollment in the City’s schools and ways to reverse this trend. Reportedly, the group’s meetings have not been open to the public and the most direct stakeholders in our schools – parents and students – have only 1 representative each, less than 10% of the group’s membership.

Declining enrollment is a serious concern for the school system, and it is appropriate and heartening to hear that BCPS recognizes the need for a group focused on this important issue. However, it is questionable whether a group can really understand and address a problem caused by the collective decisions of thousands of parents and students without meaningful participation and input from parents and students. Also, the Latinx population is the fastest growing segment that comprises overall student enrollment and is not properly represented.

A successful school system is an absolute necessity for Baltimore City. Declining enrollment is both a cause and a symptom of wider problems that our schools are experiencing. As such, it is a complicated issue that needs to be effectively and transparently considered and dealt with. The BCPS task force may in fact be a useful part of a broader effort to reverse declining enrollment; but on an issue this significant it is important that the public have a greater understanding of the task force’s role, goals, and how it’s work will advance the community engagement needed to get more children into our school system. A closed door policy simply doesn’t allow the public to get answers to those questions.

Ultimately, parents and students will determine whether enrollment in City schools climbs or declines. They need to know that their input is important and will be sought by BCPS, and they need to know everything that BCPS is doing about the enrollment problem. A public hearing before the City Council on the BCPS enrollment task force, and more broadly how BCPS plans

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

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1 to engage parents and students to address declining enrollment, would serve to provide the public
2 with the answers they need and deserve.

3 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
4 Council calls on representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools to appear before it to
5 discuss the goals and membership of their enrollment task force and how the task force fits into a
6 broader effort to engage the community to reverse declining enrollment in our school system.

7 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
8 CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.