

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON SCOTT – MAYOR

ZEKE COHEN - COUNCIL PRESIDENT



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

NANCY MEAD – DIRECTOR

100 N. HOLIDAY STREET

BALTIMORE MD, 21202

HEARING NOTES

Bill: 25-0031R

Title: Informational Hearing – Middle School Sports

Committee: Education, Youth, & Older Adults

Chaired by: John Bullock

Hearing Date: 11/13/2025

Time (Beginning): 12:34 PM

Time (Ending): 2:36 PM

Location: Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex

Total Attendance: Approximately 30

Committee Members in Attendance: Bullock, Parker, Middleton, Blanchard, Jones, Ramos

Bill Synopsis in the file? YES NO N/A

Attendance sheet in the file? YES NO N/A

Agency reports read? YES NO N/A

Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? YES NO N/A

Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file? YES NO N/A

Evidence of notification to property owners? YES NO N/A

Final vote taken at this hearing? YES NO N/A

Motioned by:

Final Vote:

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Tiffany Boyd, Director of Athletics for Baltimore City Public School

Noell West, Assistant Deputy Mayor for the Chief of Staff

Alysia Lee, President and CEO of the Baltimore Children and Youth Fund

Representative from the Department of Recreation and Parks

Major Issues Discussed

- Chair Bullock opened the hearing and introduced the bill.

- Councilmember Blanchard delivered opening remarks, expressing his enthusiasm for the hearing and highlighting the importance of middle school sports.
- Noell West, Assistant Deputy Mayor for the Chief of Staff's Office, speaking on behalf of the Mayor.
 - Emphasized the importance of equitable access to sports opportunities.
 - Noted that Baltimore now has one of the most robust middle school sports offerings in the country.
- Baltimore City Public Schools Presentation by Tiffany Boyd, Director of Athletics.
 - Prior to COVID-19, middle school sports received limited funding.
 - Discussed the partnership with Under Armour to launch hybrid programs that expose students to less common sports.
 - Highlighted district-wide competitive opportunities and collaboration with 14 partner organizations, including Coppin State University, Little League, and the National Coalition of Women's Sports.
 - Announced a new partnership with the Baltimore Children and Youth Fund (BCYF), which includes a \$300,000 investment launching this spring.
- Vice President Middleton asked about the role of school police in ensuring student safety.
 - Response: The school system relies on the school community, with officers assigned to large events and exploration of alternative security measures.
- Public Testimony
 - A middle school student testified about the importance of sports in building school spirit, preparing for high school athletics, and making friends.
 - Another student shared how sports help form bonds among students regardless of skill level.
 - Thomas Johnson Middle School Vice Principal discussed expanding athletics and the arts, noting the school now offers seven sports teams.
 - Mentioned challenges with coaching, uniforms, and time commitments.
- Baltimore Children and Youth Fund (BCYF) presentation reported investing over \$40 million in youth-serving organizations.
- Set a goal of achieving 63% middle school student sports participation by 2030.
- Highlighted the Charm City Youth Athletic Council, a youth-led group advising BCYF, City Schools, and the Charm City Sports Cabinet to promote youth leadership.
- Department of Recreation and Parks Presentation outlined goals and projections for the next three years:
 - Strengthen consistency and quality of programming.
 - Expand the variety of sports offered.
 - Improve coordination with City Schools.
- Vice Chair Parker praised BCYF's collaboration on sports initiatives.
 - Asked for clarification on the 63% participation goal—whether it refers to individual students or total sports seats.

- Response: City Schools is working to expand school participation; BCYF noted that the goal represents an overall target for access and can be supported by other funders. The ultimate goal is 100% access to movement and play.
- Asked about inclusion for students with special needs.
 - Response: City Schools stated that all students should have access; inclusive options such as bocce are currently offered.
- Raised questions about safety, athletic trainers, and coaching quality.
 - Response: Schools rely on medics at the middle school level; additional coaching training is being considered.
- Councilmember Blanchard revisited the 63% goal, asking whether facilities can support expanded participation.
 - Response: City Schools noted additional funding may be needed.
 - Recreation and Parks shared that new facilities are being designed to accommodate spectators, gyms, and multipurpose spaces, but emphasized that adequate funding will be essential to meet participation goals.
- Councilman Jones asked Recreation & Parks if they could think about creating a noncompetitive league, so that it is more inclusive.
- Councilwoman Ramos asked the Deputy Mayor will be convening all agencies for a conversation because all the information right now seems to be preliminary.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe.

Councilwoman Ramos asked for a written down record of conversations with programming and funding headed by the Mayors Office with City Schools and the Department of Recreation and Parks.

Choose an item.,

Date: 11/13/2025

Cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File