

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 07-0266R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Harris, Holton, Curran, Clarke, Welch
Introduced and read first time: March 12, 2007
Assigned to: Housing, Health, and Human Services Committee

Committee Report: Favorable
Adopted: April 30, 2007

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Informational Hearing – Baltimore Truancy Assessment Center

FOR the purpose of inviting the Executive Director of the Baltimore Truancy Assessment Center to advise the City Council on the efficacy of the Center in lowering the rate of truancy in the Baltimore Public School System, in securing inter-agency services to prevent truancy, in addressing social issues that negatively impact school-age children, and in decreasing the incidents of crimes perpetrated by juveniles.

Recitals

The Baltimore Truancy Center at 400 North Caroline Street in East Baltimore opened in November 2003, as a comprehensive approach to the escalating truancy rate in the Baltimore City Public School System and the increasing number of children who were idling on street corners – some of whom were responsible for the 60% of crime committed during the day that is attributed to juveniles.

The Center comprises an interagency collaboration that delivers a combination of services to address issues under the purview of the Department of Social Services, the Social Security Administration, the Office of Employment Development, the Baltimore Police Department, the Baltimore City Public School Offices of School Police and Pupil Guidance, the Department of Juvenile Services, and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City.

The Baltimore Truancy Center (B-TAC) *Activity Report 2003-2004 School Year, November 6, 2003 - June 30, 2004* reports that “ B-TAC opened its doors on November 6, 2003, in an effort to reduce the truancy rate of the students in the Baltimore City Public School System, and to reduce day-time crime in our City. Since then, 973 youths have been apprehended for violation of curfew laws as a result of our sweeps. In addition to getting the youths off the streets, we have provided assistance for children who are victims of abuse, neglect, prostitution, homelessness, etc. Furthermore, due to our efforts at the Center, Baltimore Police have taken into custody many youths wanted on criminal charges.”

The B-TAC *Statistical Report for School Year 2004 - 2005* shows that 1873 youths were picked up on the streets of Baltimore City for daytime curfew truancy violations. Of these, 1035 students went through B-TAC counseling and referral services. Although the number of youths apprehended nearly doubled for the previous school year, 35%, or 366, of the youths who received services improved their attendance and began attending school more regularly. In the

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

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1 following school year, 1879 youths were picked up by B-TAC staff for daytime curfew
2 violations. Of these, 1664 were taken to the Center for process while 215 were taken back to
3 school by Baltimore Police. B-TAC reported that “our efforts are now paying off as we see a
4 27% improvement in recidivism. While last year our rate was 16.2% or our total pickups, this
5 year the rate is 11.8%.”

6 The B-TAC reports for 9/25/06 - 1 /31/07 note the adoption of an amended mode of
7 operation such that:

- 8 “1. Daytime curfew violators are apprehended by Baltimore Police and taken directly to
9 school so that students get back to the educational process in a timely manner.
10 Those who are uncooperative are transported to B-TAC where efforts are made to
11 ascertain their identities. School attendance checks on all curfew violators are then
12 completed at the Center, and chronic truants are placed into the B-TAC Truancy
13 Program where each is assigned a counselor.
- 14 2. Special Investigations – Various schools, parents, and other concerned citizens
15 solicit our assistance with truant students. These cases are investigated and, should
16 counseling services be warranted, those youth are also enrolled in the program.”

17 The B-TAC Truancy Assessment Center activity reports for that time period is as follows:

- 18 • 9/25 - 10/31/06 – 892 apprehended, 124 enrolled in the Truancy Program
19 • 11/1 - 11/30/06 – 876 apprehended, 109 enrolled in the Truancy Program
20 • 12/1 - 12/31/06 – 836 apprehended, 111 enrolled in the Truancy Program
21 • 1/1 - 1/31/07 – 1097 apprehended, 68 enrolled in the Truancy Program

22 The Baltimore Truancy Assessment Center is doing a commendable job of addressing the
23 Baltimore City Public School System’s long standing problem of chronic truancy. While under
24 funding of the system is a problem that must be addressed by the State, making certain that our
25 children are in the classroom to receive what educational resources are available is a problem
26 that is best addressed at a more immediate level – our streets, our communities, our schools, and
27 our homes.

28 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
29 Executive Director of the Baltimore Truancy Assessment Center is invited to advise the City
30 Council on the efficacy of the Center in lowering the rate of truancy in the Baltimore Public
31 School System, in securing inter-agency services to prevent truancy, in addressing social issues
32 that negatively impact school-age children, and in decreasing the incidents of crimes perpetrated
33 by juveniles.

34 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
35 Executive Director of the Baltimore Truancy Assessment Center, the CEO and Chief of School
36 Police of the Baltimore City Public Schools, the Baltimore Police Commissioner, and the
37 Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.