

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 07-0268R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Harris, Holton, Clarke, Welch, Mitchell

Introduced and read first time: March 12, 2007

Assigned to: Public Safety Subcommittee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners,
Baltimore City Public School System, Police Department

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – Baltimore City Public School System – School Police**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting the Chief of School Police, Baltimore City Public School System
4 and the Baltimore City Police Commissioner to report to the City Council on the efficacy of
5 the proposed merger of the school police with the Baltimore City police force to address
6 juvenile crime and increasing gang activity in the public school system.

7 **Recitals**

8 Baltimore City school administration and police officials are reportedly seriously considering
9 merging the school police with the Baltimore City police force to help curtail crime and to
10 address the upsurge in gang activity by school age children that is taking place within the City’s
11 middle and high schools. Under the proposal, responsibility for the safety of the City’s schools
12 and the approximately 83,000 student enrollment would be transferred to the Police Department.

13 The Maryland Association of School Resource Officers is comprised of police officers,
14 probation officers, school administrators, school counselors, parents, and teachers “who care
15 about maintaining safe schools in Maryland”. School Resource Officers, or school police, serve
16 3 major roles in Maryland Schools:

- 17 • as Law Enforcement Officers within the school and surrounding community.
- 18 • as instructors who teach law related topics in the classroom
- 19 • as student mentor/advisors to help resolve conflicts without violence.

20 Although the SRO program is fairly new to Maryland, it is more that 20 years old
21 nationwide. Recognizing the special nature of ‘policing’ the adolescent population, the National
22 Association of School Resource Officers offers specialized training in:

- 23 • Alcohol Use
- 24 • Adolescence
- 25 • Community Policing
- 26 • Delinquent Behaviors
- 27 • Drivers Education: DUI, General, Moving Violation, Traffic Stop
- 28 • Law Enforcement Careers
- 29 • Laws and Policies

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

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- 1 • Resources for Officers
- 2 • Safety: Bicycle, Community, Firearm, Internet, Parenting, Personal, School
- 3 • Self-Esteem
- 4 • Special Law Enforcement Units
- 5 • Substance Abuse
- 6 • Violence: Child Abuse, Domestic, Gang, General, School, Witness

7 While the merger is favored by police as a measure to better address juvenile crime and
8 provide a “seamless law enforcement effort”, the Chair of the Baltimore City Board of School
9 Commissioners voiced opposition to the move because of the specialized nature of the school
10 police department whose employees are trained specially to deal with juveniles.

11 The formation of the national association, as well as approximately 20 state organizations –
12 including Maryland’s, of school resource officers and the specialized training that is offered
13 recognizes the unique nature of the work done by these professionals. Given the delicate nature
14 of adolescent development, the rate of truancy in Baltimore public schools, and the unpredictable
15 directions adolescent angst-driven behavior may take, a staff sensitive to the developmental
16 stages of children may be a resource as valuable to our schools as qualified instructors.

17 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
18 Chief of School Police, Baltimore City Public School System and the Baltimore City Police
19 Commissioner are requested to report to the City Council on the efficacy of the proposed merger
20 of the school police with the Baltimore City police force to address juvenile crime and increasing
21 gang activity in the public school system.

22 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
23 CEO and Chief of School Police of the Baltimore City Public School System, the Chair and
24 Members of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, the Baltimore Police
25 Commissioner, the President of the Baltimore City Council of PTA’s, the Chair of the Parent and
26 Community Advisory Board, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.