

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 14-0162R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke, President Young, Councilmembers Curran, Scott,  
Kraft, Stokes, Mosby, Cole, Holton, Middleton, Spector, Branch, Henry, Reisinger  
Introduced and read first time: March 24, 2014  
Assigned to: Education and Youth Committee  
Committee Report: Favorable with an amendment  
Adopted: September 22, 2014

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**A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING**

**School System Attendance and the Teamwork Required to Address**

FOR the purpose of requesting information about the status of school system attendance by grade in both traditional and charter public schools, appropriate roles for school leaders in supporting system attendance goals, school system resources and services provided to school leaders in support of this effort, the system's reason for choosing the final quarter of this school year to focus on this issue; and, a request that the school system and the School Board take a lead in engaging the entire Baltimore community in a citywide attendance campaign, emphasizing the stake we all have in getting our children and youth to school everyday.

**WHEREAS**, The fourth quarter (April 2 until the last day of school) is traditionally the lowest attendance quarter of any school year. It is this quarter in which a number of public schools and their school leaders are being required to meet certain systemwide attendance goals or face sanctions. The first three quarters will not be counted toward any cumulative losses or gains for the year, despite year-long school efforts and plans to increase attendance. It all depends on that solo fourth quarter.

**WHEREAS**, Contrary to common perception, many principals at-risk for attendance to date have been judged on attendance in a single quarter, the second quarter of this school year, and have not been credited for cumulative progress. Many have met daily attendance reporting requirements, organized rigorous Student Support Teams (SST's), and implemented school attendance monitoring plans, with teachers calling the families of any students absent for three days and meetings with families if this baseline increased to 10 days by December. Many have dispatched school social workers to make home visits once student attendance still failed to improve.

**WHEREAS**, Principals, teachers, and schools have their marching orders and crucial roles to play in getting our children to school. In many cases and places, however, even "best practices" and diligence have failed to meet minimum goals.

**WHEREAS**, "School communities cannot do this alone." How many families and communities really understand, for example, that kindergarten students are now required to attend school? Such was not the case for their parents and grandparents. Kindergarten attendance is especially important, however, because it sets the pattern for a child's attendance going forward. How has the community been mobilized to assist by the school system, the

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

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1 School Board, the Mayor and City Council? Where’s the action plan which includes our entire  
2 community?

3 **WHEREAS**, Diligent principals deserve better than to be singled-out at the end of a difficult  
4 year of snow days, late days, and a new curriculum as the “principal” causes of an attendance  
5 failure for which the entire community must take a share of responsibility.

6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, that the City  
7 Council calls upon the School Board to reconsider PIP sanctions on a case-by-case basis for  
8 school leaders who have met their attendance requirements and engaged their school staffs and  
9 family organizations in these efforts; and, calls upon the School Board to put efforts into  
10 outreach, in a planful, multimedia campaign as pervasive as those for smoke detectors and  
11 mechanical sweeping. The Council resolves to support as priorities 3 key attendance  
12 requirements:

- 13 1. safe and reliable MTA transportation for City students;
- 14 2. onsite health resources in our schools; and
- 15 3. safe pathways for children walking to and from school.

16 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
17 President and Members of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, the President of  
18 the Baltimore City Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association, and the Mayor’s  
19 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.