

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Stephanie Rawlings-Blake**  
*Mayor, City of Baltimore*

**Marnell A. Cooper**  
*Chair, Baltimore City Board of  
School Commissioners*

**Gregory E. Thornton, Ed.D.**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

February 11, 2016

The Honorable Bernard C. "Jack" Young  
President, Baltimore City Council  
City Hall, Room 400  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: Position Statement  
City Council Resolution 15-0263R

Dear Council President Young:

On September 21, 2015 the Baltimore City Council introduced the above-captioned bill (Resolution) to improve access to broadband internet services in Baltimore and advance a comprehensive broadband development and implementation plan for the city.

Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) applauds any efforts to improve broadband in Baltimore City; however, the description of our schools not meeting the 1,000 megabits per second (Mbps) goal of the FCC and the statement that "many of our schools have bandwidths far deficient from these standards" is inaccurate. City Schools is in a very good place in reference to broadband to our schools. Within the past several years, the Wide Area Network (WAN) bandwidth to most of our school buildings (152 or 81%) has been upgraded to 1,000 Mbps.

The district has upgraded its Internet access using dark fiber, allowing it to use 4 Gbps currently and scale up to 10 Gbps per data center. Our two district data centers, located at the district administrative building and Digital Harbor High School, have a total ramp up capacity of 20 Gbps. The connectivity between the two data centers is currently 40 Gbps, with the capacity to grow exponentially based on the 96 strands of fiber between the two data centers. The improvements in the district's networks have made it possible to host all of our enterprise applications and create redundancy for the district's data center. We also host a number of Baltimore City's applications, including police video cameras.

City Schools is also interested in exploring the adaptability of our school fiber network to the provision of affordable high speed Internet access to our communities. On February 8, 2016 the district participated in a roundtable discussion with federal, state and city representatives as a first step toward potentially designing and implementing such a network and exploring various funding strategies to accomplish that goal.

Thank you for inviting City Schools to participate in this very important process. We will be pleased to testify further on these issues upon request.

Sincerely,



Gregory E. Thornton, Ed.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

Comments

