

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 18-0116R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Dorsey, Henry, President Young, Councilmembers Scott,
Pinkett, Cohen, Sneed, Middleton, Bullock, Clarke, Reisinger, Stokes, Burnett
Introduced and adopted: December 3, 2018

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

The Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education - Arts Education

FOR the purpose of requesting that the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education include arts education as part of the base educational funding formula to enable local educational systems to comply with the Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 13A.04.16.

Recitals

On October 18, 2018, the Baltimore City Council Youth and Education Committee held a public hearing on the status of arts education in the Baltimore City Public School System (“BCPSS”). At the public hearing, BCPSS staff, as well as students, parents, and community members testified about the lack of arts education BCPSS students receive. Only 78% of pre-kindergarten through 8th grade students are enrolled in the visual arts, and only 53% of pre-kindergarten through 8th grader students are enrolled in music. Less than 7% of students are enrolled in dance or theater courses. In Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties, every pre-kindergarten through 8th grade student receives instruction in the visual arts and music by certified teachers every year.

The inequity between the education BCPSS students receive and the education that students from the counties receive is partially due to deficient state-wide funding. The State has found that BCPSS should receive an additional \$290-358 million each year. This shortfall in funding has resulted in devastating cuts to the BCPSS budget over the past decade.

In June of this year, BCPSS adopted the Baltimore Arts Education Initiative (“BAEI”) Strategic Plan and 5-year implementation goals to meet COMAR standards and achieve equity and excellence in arts education for all BCPSS students. The BAEI is the result of a 6-month-long project that had over 100 stakeholders, including students, parents, community members and organizations, principals, teachers, artists, the City Council, and BCPSS central office staff. Through direct engagement with the development and implementation of the plan, CEO Dr. Sonja Santelises and her staff have taken a proactive stance in addressing the gross inequities in arts education between city schools and schools in the counties. Arts education is essential in fulfilling the “whole child” component of the BCPSS *Blueprint for Success*.

The Baltimore City Council has a deep and continuing interest and commitment to supporting opportunities for the youth of Baltimore City. We are in the first year of implementation of the Children and Youth fund – proposed by Council President Jack Young and confirmed by 80% of voters in 2016 – that provides \$12 million in grants annually to childhood and youth programs. Some of these programs include extracurricular arts

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

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1 opportunities, but this cannot substitute for or begin to address the current inequities in
2 standards-based school arts programs.

3 These inequities can only be addressed with adequate state funding. All students in Maryland
4 deserve access to a world-class education. Arts education – dance, media, music, theater, and
5 visual arts – is an essential element of a well-rounded education. Maryland’s educational
6 funding formula should reflect and support what has been recognized and memorialized in
7 COMAR, by the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, and the State
8 legislature, that arts education is part of a well-rounded education for every student. The State
9 Board of Education in 1997, and again 2017, confirmed standards-based arts education in
10 COMAR as essential to a complete education for students in Maryland. Unfortunately, the State
11 has not provided the resources to fund this mandate. The Commission on Innovation and
12 Excellence in Education has the opportunity and responsibility to fund this mandate.

13 In order to fulfil the requirements described in COMAR, the Commission should align
14 adequate funding to enable each Maryland school district to meet the requirements of COMAR.
15 The Commission should support base funding formulas that enable school districts to support a
16 150-450:1 student to art teacher ratio at the elementary school level, a 750-900:1.5/2 student to
17 art teacher ratio at the middle school level, and a 1200-2000:3/5 student to art teacher ratio at the
18 high school level. The Commission should include standards or curricular frameworks with
19 embedded standards in instructional systems, as stipulated in COMAR, for subjects in which
20 students receive core content credit.

21 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
22 Baltimore City Council requests that the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in
23 Education include arts education as part of the base educational funding formula to enable local
24 educational systems to comply with the Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 13A.04.16.

25 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Chair and all
26 Commissioners of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, the Baltimore
27 City 2019 delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, the Chair and Vice Chair of the
28 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Standing Committee of the Maryland Senate, the
29 Chair and Vice Chair of the Ways and Means Standing Committee of the Maryland House of
30 Delegates, the Senate President of the Maryland General Assembly, the House Speaker of the
31 Maryland General Assembly, the Baltimore City Director of Government Relations, the CEO of
32 the Baltimore City Public School System, the Mayor, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the
33 Baltimore City Council.