



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Restoring Needed Funds to BCPSS

FOR the purpose of urging the Mayor and Board of Estimates to use Rainy Day Funds to "make whole" the \$25 million pledged for BCPSS new construction and renovation of local school buildings and to maintain the Administration's current operational budget commitment to after-school and community-school programs.

Sponsors: Mary Pat Clarke, President Young, Nicholas C. D'Adamo, Helen L. Holton, Edward Reisinger, Keiffer Mitchell, Sharon Green Middleton

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Restoring Needed Funds to BCPSS

FOR the purpose of urging the Mayor and Board of Estimates to use Rainy Day Funds to "make whole" the \$25 million pledged for BCPSS new construction and renovation of local school buildings and to maintain the Administration's current operational budget commitment to after-school and community-school programs.

Recitals

WHEREAS, this Baltimore City Council, just one year ago, approved a supplementary appropriation, proposed by then Mayor Martin O'Malley, to provide \$25 million in surplus dollars to address the capital needs, for new school construction and renovations, of the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS).

WHEREAS, this \$25 million was represented as a "down payment" on a total Mayor and City Council capital contribution of \$75 million to meet BCPSS' capital needs, with additional funds from the sale of surplus schools, from general obligation bonds approved by City voters, and from future surplus dollars.

WHEREAS, an example of the wisdom and urgency of this appropriation is the current shortfall in required capital dollars to prepare "receiving schools" by August 2007 for the influx of students displaced through current school closures and consolidations.

WHEREAS, the "receiving school" cost for August 2006 was \$33 million and involved the "transfer" of almost 5,000 students displaced by school closures and consolidations.

WHEREAS, this \$25 million was never transferred to BCPSS and has now been reduced by \$5 million through actions of the Finance Department and Board of Estimates.

WHEREAS, the rationale for this "cut" has been to provide operational funding for after-school and community-school programs, whose advocates had argued with the new Mayor's Transition Team for stable sources of ongoing funding as opposed to one-time, surplus funding.

WHEREAS, our Baltimore City students will suffer a net loss of \$5 million should this capital cut go unchallenged and uncorrected in the course of the City Council's current Fiscal Year 2008 budget deliberations.

WHEREAS, this transfer unfairly pits the equally compelling values of after-school and community-school programs against our City's urgent need to build new schools, renovate old ones, and retrofit existing school buildings for the influx of thousands of displaced students.

WHEREAS, in the short term, the City's "Rainy Day Fund" has a current balance of \$75 million, and "It's raining!" in our school buildings and school communities.

WHEREAS, the "Rainy Day Fund" is of recent origin and is available for just such crises as this "cut," transfer, and \$5 million net loss.

WHEREAS, what better use than now of the "Rainy Day Fund's" all-time-high balance than to protect and enrich our children through stable after-school and community-school programs and to pursue the City's goal of well-equipped, heated, cooled, attractive, sanitary, secure, and functional environments for every child's education, in every neighborhood of our City.

WHEREAS, if our children are the City's priority, we cannot in justice accept an "either-or" response to their multiple and basic requirements for success, a response that should never be allowed to pit advocate against advocate or need against need.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Baltimore City Council, in the throes of its budget deliberations, calls upon the Mayor and the Board of Estimates to resolve the current crisis in funding-for-students by restoring the \$5 million now to the \$25 million capital fund, using the "Rainy Day Fund" if necessary, and by retaining the funds appropriated for after-school and community-school programs, pledging to incorporate this funding into the core of future budgets.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be hand-carried to the following, for their attention: the Mayor; the City's Finance and Budget directors; Dr. Charlene Cooper Boston, CEO, BCPSS; Mr. Keith Scroggins, COO, BCPSS; and President Brian Morris and all members of the BCPSS Board of School

Commissioners.

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