



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Holton

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning **Informational Hearing - Baltimore City Schools - No Child Left Behind**

FOR the purpose of requesting the CEO of Baltimore City Schools to share with the City Council the current status of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act - or No Child Left Behind (NCLB); to address plans to opt out of certain mandates of NCLB, and; to report on the programs, if any, that will be adopted in place of NCLB to ensure that Baltimore City students maintain or surpass educational achievement levels.

Recitals

An op-ed in the January 8, 2012 edition of the Washington Post states that ten years ago today the No Child Left Behind Act was enacted. “The law has improved American education in some ways, but it also has flaws that need to be fixed. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for the first time exposed achievement gaps and created a conversation about how to close them. The law held schools accountable for the performance of all students no matter their race, income level, English-proficiency or disability. Schools can no longer point to average scores while hiding an achievement gap that is morally unacceptable and economically unsustainable.”

Some four months earlier, the White House Office of the Press Secretary announced that: “In an effort to support local and state education reform across America, the White House today outlined how states can get relief from provisions of NCLB in exchange for serious state-led efforts to close achievement gaps, promote rigorous accountability, and ensure that all students are on track to graduate college- and career-ready.”

States can request flexibility from specific NCLB mandates that are hampering reform, but “only if they are transitioning students, teachers, and schools to a system aligned with college- and career-ready standards for all students, developing differentiated accountability systems, and undertaking reforms to support effective classroom instruction and school leadership.”

The Baltimore City Public Schools 2010-2011 School Performance Plan created a new process for improvement

planning. Instead of revising the comprehensive two-year School Improvement Plan annually, schools will complete a one-year amendment to their comprehensive plan. This amendment will include an updated analysis of school data that leads to a reprioritizing and/or shift of initiatives and interventions to reflect the most current needs of their population and will transition into a more comprehensive, strategic use of resources to accelerate student achievement. This planning process is aligned with the City Schools Essentials, Vision, Mission, and Goals.

“The City Schools Essentials provide a set of value statements that define what is important in our work. In addition to aligning the work with The Essentials, our planning process for school success must address federal requirements for Title I and/or NCLB which apply to the majority of our schools. Each year, we consider the most effective way to fulfill our values and meet our requirements. The City Schools Vision: Every student will graduate ready to achieve excellence in higher education or the global workforce; City Schools Mission: Excellence in education for every child at every level.”

There is a broad interest in understanding whether NCLB has influenced student achievement. The authors of a report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES) note that achievement trends on both state assessments and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) were “positive overall and for key subgroups” through 2005. Using more recent data, a report by the Center on Education Policy concludes that reading and math achievement as measured by state assessments has increased in most states since 2002 and that there have been smaller but similar patterns in NAEP scores. Both reports were careful to stress that these national gains are not necessarily attributable to the effects of NCLB.

As the federal requirements for implementation of NCLB change and states are granted relief from education mandates, it is essential that we understand the effects on our students - what NCLB brought to the table and what state-led measures will be implemented in its stead.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the CEO of Baltimore City Schools is requested to share with the City Council the current status of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act - or No Child Left Behind (NCLB) - in Baltimore City Schools; to address plans to opt out of certain provisions of NCLB, and; to report on the programs, if any, that will be adopted in place of NCLB to ensure that Baltimore City students maintain or surpass educational achievement levels.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the CEO of Baltimore City Schools, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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