



Legislation Text

File #: 08-0068R, Version: 0

* WARNING: THIS IS AN UNOFFICIAL, INTRODUCTORY COPY OF THE BILL.
THE OFFICIAL COPY CONSIDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL IS THE FIRST READER COPY.
INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: President Rawlings-Blake

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Baltimore City Public School Teachers - Gang Related Violence Training

FOR the purpose of requesting the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System to develop and implement a program for teachers to provide them with the tools to recognize gang-related violence, to identify youth most at-risk for gang recruitment, and to provide the necessary intervention resources and law enforcement interaction to insure the safety and security of students, school personnel, and school property.

Recitals

Gang activity in Baltimore City has historically been attributed to local “crews” made up mostly of drug dealers who typically named their organizations after their neighborhood or streets. By May 2006, however, police officials acknowledged that the members of these organizations were beginning to identify themselves as members of well-known gangs.

In June 2006, the Vice-Chair of the Mid- Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network, an anti-drug summit of 300 law enforcement officers, elected officials, and educators hosted by federal prosecutors in Columbia, Maryland, reported there were at least 100 gangs in Maryland. The Chief of the Baltimore Police Department’s criminal intelligence unit reported that national gangs had arrived in large numbers in Baltimore in the past 10 months. Between 1999 and 2005, the City had a single “Bloods” and “Crips” set. At the time of the summit, the gangs had increased to 14 “Bloods” and 5 “Crips” sets.

Council Bill 06-0241R: Informational Hearing - Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction Plan, May 7, 2007, presented information from the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention that 100s of gangs existed in Baltimore, including youth gangs that operated in neighborhoods or schools and drug gangs: “The vast majority of youth gangs are neighborhood gangs composed of 8 to 15 youth who focus their activities in a specific housing area.” Further, it was found that “school gangs exist in a limited number of schools in Baltimore. These gangs are school based and are responsible for robberies, assaults, and intimidation/bullying in some schools. These gangs operate mainly in the school and the surrounding neighborhoods before and after school.”

While there is no definitive guide to creating a gang related violence training program for teachers, the U.S. Department of Education points out some of the pitfalls of existing programs in Youth Gangs: Going Beyond the

Myths to Address a Critical Problem:

- “There is much room for the improvement in the quality of programs in some straightforward ways. This includes increases in the use of practices with respect to program content and methods that are found in programs that have been evaluated and found to be effective. It includes increases in the intensity (duration and frequency) with which programs are operated and includes increases in extent of their application.”
- “A principal implication of the data on quality is that a large fraction of these programs are not programmatic in the sense that they are well-developed and high-quality systems of service. Quite the opposite. It appears likely that the quality of prevention activity in schools might improve if it were consolidated into a smaller number of higher-quality programs.”
- “Results show that secondary students who report being involved in gangs are less exposed to many prevention activities than are students who are not exposed to gangs. This suggests the potential for including more of the highest-risk youth by actively seeking ways to include them. An analysis of the forces that limit gang-involved youth from participation should be part of the planning of any gang prevention or intervention program, with program design features or arrangements put in place to cope with or minimize the influence of these forces.”
- “Fewer than half of gang prevention or intervention programs have been guided by a formal needs assessment. Formal planning is associated with stronger programs.”
- “Formal needs assessment may contribute to (or depend on) principals’ willingness to identify problems related to gangs. The finding that principals usually report that gangs are not a problem even in schools with a high percentage of students reporting that they participate in gangs suggests that lack of principal recognition of problems may be an obstacle to the development of effective prevention and intervention programs. At the very least, the results imply that principals’ reports that gang activity is not a problem should be met with skepticism unless evidence from other sources confirms the reports.”

The City Council recognizes the need to address the problem of gang related violence in our city schools but does not seek to direct the CEO and staff of the Baltimore City Public School System on how to best implement such a program. The expertise of our educators, along with the guidelines offered by the U. S. Department of Education, can result in an effective training program that will assist our teachers in protecting our children from violence and providing those children with an alternative to the deathly siren call of the gangs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System is requested to develop and implement a program for teachers to provide them with the tools to recognize gang-related violence, to identify youth most at-risk for gang recruitment, and to provide the necessary intervention resources and law enforcement interaction to insure the safety and security of students, school personnel, and school property.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Baltimore Police Commissioner and the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice are requested to provide their assistance at the request of the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System, the Baltimore Police Commissioner, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

dlr 08-414~intro/17Sep08
ccres/violencetrng/nf

dlr 08-414~intro/17Sep08
??2??
ccres/violencetrng/nf