



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: President Rawlings-Blake

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Back to School Welcome

FOR the purpose of welcoming Baltimore City school students back to school, congratulating City elementary and middle public school students for impressive gains on the 2007 Maryland School Assessment, supporting high school students in their quest to "stay the course" until graduation, encouraging all students to strive for academic excellence in the upcoming 2007-2008 session, urging parents and guardians to take an active role in assisting students in academic and extra-curricular endeavors, and committing to direct governmental resources to improving schools, making our streets safe, and providing safe havens and meaningful after-school activities for Baltimore City's youth.

Recitals

At the close of the 2006-2007 school year, the interim CEO announced that Baltimore City Public Schools' elementary and middle students continue to advance on annual State achievement tests at almost every grade level in reading and mathematics; that students in grades 3 - 8 made impressive gains in mathematics on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), and that grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 made gains in reading. Students in grades 4, 5, and 6 achieved double digit mathematics gains in the percentage of students achieving proficient or advanced on State tests, and 4th and 6th grade performances in reading were also strong, with increases of more than 3 percentage points in the number of students achieving proficient or advanced.

The achievements of Baltimore City Public Schools' high school students were frequently highlighted in the President's Schoolspot that featured outstanding students, parents, and faculty, throughout the school year. The Western High School Senior who won 2 State titles as the Class 4A- 3A Track and Field Championships; the Lab Rats, Dunbar High School's Robotic Team, that won 2nd place in the First Chesapeake Regional; 4 Baltimore Polytechnic Institute students who won awards at the State Competition for National History Day; the National Academy Foundation High School in Baltimore that received the first ever Aldo Papone Award for Leadership in Academy Performance; the students at the Baltimore Freedom Academy who were honored for their dedication to social justice; and the Poly biology student who won a scholarship as a finalist in the Intel Science Talent Search Competition provide fine examples of the winning spirit that drives our high school students to persevere.

U.S. Census figures show that, in 2005, there were 243,000 households in Baltimore City with an average household size of 2.5 people. It is the more than 125,000, or 52%, of these households that comprise families, along with other stakeholders in Baltimore communities, that can make a difference in academic outcomes. In developing the Family and Community Engagement Policy, school officials recognized "current research that shows that when families are involved in their children's education they have better attendance, demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors, complete more homework, earn better grades, receive higher test scores, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less involved families." Through the programs offered by the Office of Parent Involvement and School, Family, Community Connections, parents, families, and guardians can more fully participate in the educational lives of public school students.

The Baltimore City Council has been fully engaged in championing the needs of students. Although direct control of the public school system has been wrested from local government, the Council will continue to support State legislation that seeks to bring our school system to fiscal, capital, and educational resource parity with the rest of the State, will partner with State representatives to craft legislative remedies to systemic inequities, will monitor Baltimore City School Board policies, and will evaluate existing educational programs and expand the ones that work and eliminate the programs that don't.

As we welcome students "Back To School" and encourage them to do their best, we must do our best to stay the course - to not only make our schools better, but to make our streets safer, and to provide a safe haven for the hours when our young people are not engaged in supervised school activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body welcomes Baltimore City school students back to school, congratulates City elementary and middle school students for impressive gains on the 2007 Maryland School Assessment, supports high school students in their quest to "stay the course" until graduation, encourages all students to strive for academic excellence in the upcoming 2007-2008 session, urges parents and guardians to take an active role in assisting students in academic and extra-curricular endeavors, and commits to direct governmental resources to improving schools, making our streets safe, and providing safe havens and meaningful after-school activities for Baltimore City's youth.

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 Chair or the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners; Principals of Baltimore City Public Elementary, Middle and High Schools, Presidents of Baltimore City Parent Teacher Associations, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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