



City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Henry and Clarke

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

More Funding for Community Schools and Out - of - School - Time Activities

FOR the purpose calling on the Mayor of Baltimore to increase funding for community schools and out of school time activities in FY 2017 by \$4 million, to a total of \$10 million, to support existing and developing community schools and out of school time activities in Baltimore; and requesting that the Mayor's Office and all of the Children's Cabinet Agencies work with the City Council's Education & Youth Committee, the Baltimore Education Coalition, the Maryland Out of School Time Network, and the Baltimore City Public School System to create a strategic plan and policy for the citywide expansion and growth of Baltimore's community school and out of school time strategy, one which incorporates and builds upon the existing history and infrastructure.

Recitals

Community schools are a strategy, not a program. A community school is a place and a set of strategic partnerships among the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning and the well-being of families and communities; maintaining a core focus on children, while recognizing that children grow up in families, and that families are integral parts of communities. Community schools build an integrated strategy that enhances academics, enrichment, health and social supports, family engagement, youth and community development, which improves student well-being and is anchored by the role of a site coordinator and expanded hours. This integrated strategy will lead to student success, strong families, and healthy communities.

Parents, teachers, students, advocates, academics, and politicians have increasingly come to see community schools as an effective strategy to combat the impact of poverty on student performance and to close the growing educational gap in this nation. Reliable estimates from the Coalition for Community Schools indicate that there may be as many as 5,000 community schools in this country. The 2014 America After 3 report states that there are 10.2 million students participating in after-

school programs but still more than 11.2 million children unsupervised. The Obama Administration has proposed substantial investments in Community Schools and after-school programs. Local, state, and non-federal national funding also can be applied to community school and after-school program efforts. Evaluations of community schools around the country reveal academic gains, improved attendance, fewer dropouts, decreased behavioral and disciplinary problems, increased parental engagement, and greater access to community services.

Similarly, out-of school time activities provide many benefits to the students who are given the opportunity. According to the Harvard Family Research Project, afterschool programs are a powerful influence in the lives of young people; they offer safe spaces where youth receive personal attention, find academic support, form friendships, discover their passions, and develop new talents. In many studies, these activities have been shown to increase academic performance. While we do not yet have enough information to fully assess the specific impact that Baltimore community schools and out of school time have on students, parents, teachers and communities here, preliminary data from the Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC) suggests that local community schools and out of school time programs are effective in reducing chronic absenteeism and suspension rates, and contribute to a more positive and effective learning environment for students. Some community schools and out of school time have already seen improved academic comprehension and performance.

After-school/out-of-school time programs are also a proven crime prevention method. C.O. Bradford, an at-large member of Houston's City Council and former Houston chief of police, and Lisa Caruthers, director of the Harris County Department of Education's Cooperative for After-School Enrichment, wrote in 2012 that such programs "reduce the strain on our police force, ease the minds of working parents and provide healthy alternatives for youths' attention and energy. Investments in academic and community-based programming help prepare youth for their future and reduce the burden on the juvenile justice system...Through hands-on, collaborative projects, quality after-school/out-of-school time programming actively engages youth in daily skill building that enhances their overall learning experience. After-school opportunities made possible for youth in need not only keep them in a safe, supervised environment, they also connect them to caring adults who deliver proper guidance, coaching and counseling for success in life and the future work force."

Baltimore has the opportunity to help more of our city's children get a better start in life, by expanding our use of the community school strategy, along with a similar increase in the opportunities for meaningful out-of-school time activities. In so doing, it can serve as a state and national example of successful and transformational educational reform. The additional \$4 million being requested will be able to further leverage additional funding through public and private dollars into Baltimore City Schools, maintaining last year's expansion to 60 Community Schools and 6,000 out-of-school time slots. A social return on investment study of Children's Aid Society Community Schools found that every dollar spent returns between \$10.30 and \$14.80 of social value.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, that the Council calls on the Mayor to increase funding for community schools and out of school time activities in FY 2017 by \$4 million, to a total of \$10 million, to support existing and developing community schools and out of school time activities in Baltimore; and requesting that the Mayor's Office and all of the Children's Cabinet Agencies work with the City Council's Education & Youth

Committee, the Baltimore Education Coalition, the Maryland Out of School Time Network, and the Baltimore City Public School System to create a strategic plan and policy for the citywide expansion and growth of Baltimore's community school and out of school time strategy, one which incorporates and builds upon the existing history and infrastructure.

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

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