

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners*

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Opposition of
House Bill 15
Public Schools – Student Health – Certificate of Dental Health**

January 28, 2020

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports the sponsor’s desire to ensure that each student enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the State shall submit to the school a certificate of dental health. Currently, Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) provides dental services to those students that obtain parental permission. Dental services are just as important to the health of a student as medical examinations and vaccinations.

However, City Schools would urge the committee to not require students provide certification of dental health as this would potentially pose a barrier to student learning. The bill is not clear in the intention that it would require school systems to remove students that do not obtain the certification, but removal would hinder the educational opportunities for students. Unlike immunizations, bad dental health does not spread disease among the school, therefore a barrier to education for lack of dental certification should not exist.

Additionally, the certification process will only make more bureaucracy and require another team of staff to contact parents who are out of compliance, with nothing to mandate that the dental services be performed.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners urges an unfavorable report.

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