

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Johnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

## **Testimony of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners House Bill 1267 Promise Schools – Establishment**

**March 14, 2023**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners has several concerns and anticipates significant fiscal impact should the proposed legislation become law.

The legislation would dilute existing Concentrations of Poverty Grant (CPG) funds for the purpose of creating a new category of schools called “Promise Schools” that are low performing. In addition, it would re-create student transfer provisions (similar to No Child Left Behind) for students in Promise Schools to attend schools elsewhere in the state and for per pupil funds to follow those students. The bill also seems to be in competition with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation requirements.

Allowing students to transfer to other schools and providing transportation to those students would pose a substantial cost to the district. In addition, if students are allowed to attend county schools, the district must also reimburse the county for that cost. This could take a significant amount of funding from City Schools’ budget if students are transferring to county schools.

The legislation also dictates that districts have a Director of Community Schools – which City Schools does not have presently and would pose yet another cost.

Finally, the bill seems to conflate community schools with academics. Community Schools is a whole child strategy, which ensures barriers are removed so students can fully participate in their academic program.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners provides this information for consideration while this legislation is being debated.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
[dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-250-0190

Melissa Broome  
Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs  
[mcbroome@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:mcbroome@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-525-3038