

**The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners**  
**Letter of Information**  
**HB 197 - Public Schools- Restorative Practices Schools –**  
**Comprehensive Plan**

**January 29, 2025**

This legislation requires the Maryland State Department of Education to develop a comprehensive plan to establish a Restorative Practices Schools. It does not requires school systems or any school to establish restorative practices. The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports restorative practices as one manner in which to work with students, but there are also other research based and effective practices that other schools practice and may use to support their students. Restorative practices is valuable, but not the only “tool in the tool box.” However, restorative practices has proven to be an effective manner to improve the school community and school relationships.

The one concern that the Board would like to express is that without knowing what types of guidance, stipulations, requirements that MSDE will develop in its comprehensive plan it is uncertain if any City Schools would or could participate. First and foremost, if the plan established by MSDE requires appointment of a restorative practices coach at every public school that would use the comprehensive plan, it may be cost prohibitive. The bill includes no funding for any positions, should MSDE require it. The legislation does not specify how this requirement is meant to interact with the myriad requirements cited in the Blueprint – many of which school systems are still attempting to accommodate.

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners provides this letter of information.

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