

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Support
Senate Bill 99 - Open Meetings Act - County Boards of Education - Enhanced Requirements
(Local Boards of Education Transparency Act)**

April 1, 2026

This legislation would make local boards of education and the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners be subjected to enhanced requirements under the Open Meetings Act. The school board is thankful that the sponsor has adopted the amendments that were of concern to the school board and finds that the legislation, as amended will not hinder the operations of the school board meetings. The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners prizes itself as having open and transparent processes and meetings to keep the public informed of school board and school system activities.

Currently, the school board livestreams all of its public board meetings and committee meetings through the TEAMS platform. This platform allows the board meetings and committee meetings to be seen online. Furthermore, the meetings are played on Youtube, as the Baltimore City Schools has a Youtube channel. All meeting agenda and documents are posted on the City Schools website prior to all public board and committee meetings. There are also times that a committee of the Board will conduct a meeting at a school and livestream it. The Board has no concerns with having the public view live meetings.

The Board is grateful that the amendments allow edited versions of the meetings should the need arise. Within the last several months, the Board was a victim of someone logging into the meeting and performing obscene and pornographic content. The person that logged onto the meeting also showed antisemitic pictures. The Board's Information Technology Office took the meeting offline while dealing with the situation, however, some of that content was visible to all viewers on line and in the meeting room. Board's need the latitude to appropriately edit the videos as this is clearly content that no one should be subjected to view.

One issues that is worrisome is the public speaking during public comment on matters that are not allowed under the law. The legislation does not address this event. Even though the Board provides to speakers the rules for public comment and ask speakers the topic prior to the speaker providing testimony to the Board, sometimes people will not disclose their true topic and speak on items such as personnel issues that can, only by law, be spoken to other parties with the consent of the subject. Even though the Board provides these guidelines and the

Board Chair will attempt to stop the speaker discussing unlawful items during public comment, if some of the information is spoken, the Board should have the ability to edit out such comments.

The school board thanks the sponsor for the amendment to allow the school board to use a third party provider to view and store all video meetings.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports Senate Bill 99.

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