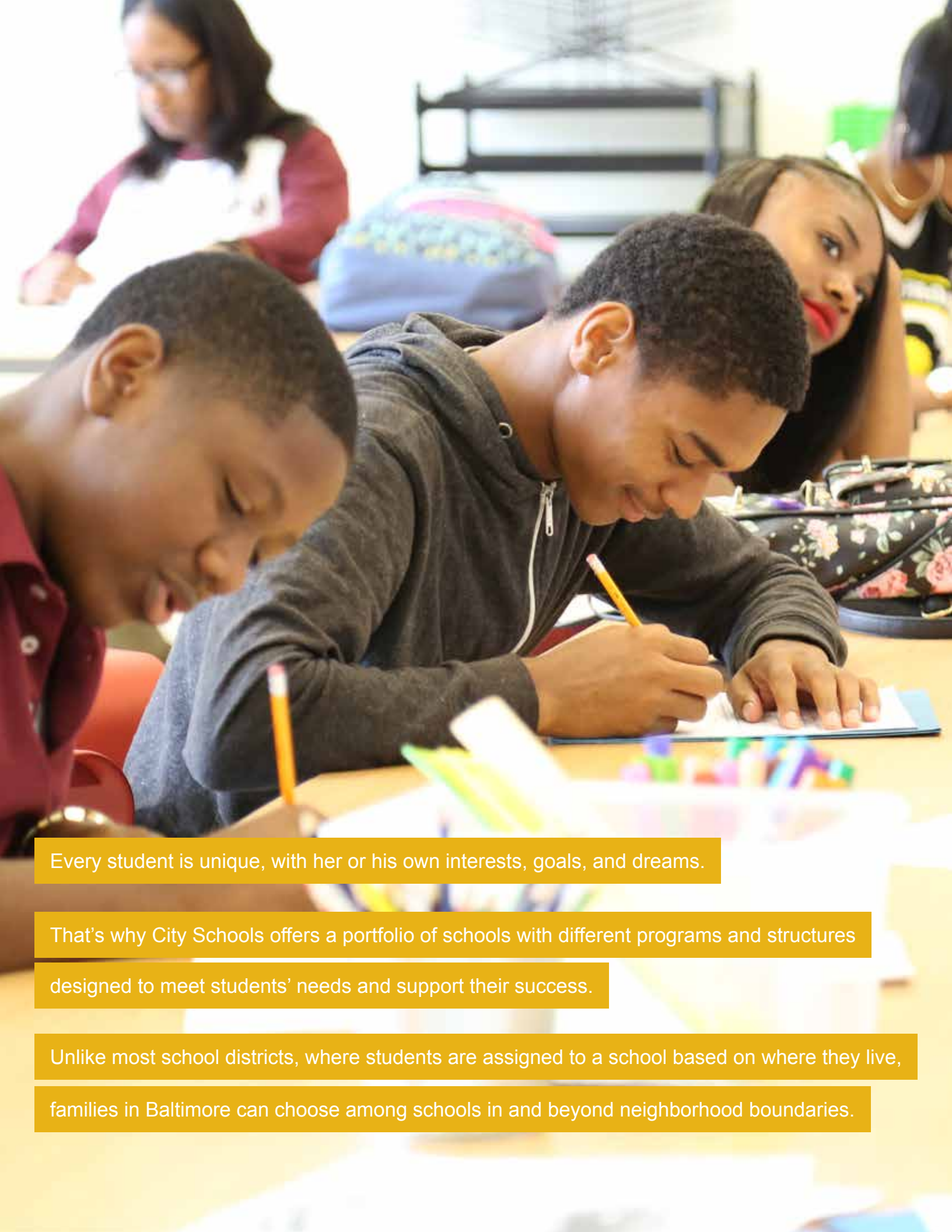


BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BUILDING A PORTFOLIO OF SCHOOLS

2017-18 Review and Recommendations





Every student is unique, with her or his own interests, goals, and dreams.

That's why City Schools offers a portfolio of schools with different programs and structures designed to meet students' needs and support their success.

Unlike most school districts, where students are assigned to a school based on where they live, families in Baltimore can choose among schools in and beyond neighborhood boundaries.

Building a Generation with a Portfolio of Schools

In City Schools' portfolio approach, individual schools have more flexibility and autonomy over many aspects of decision making than do schools in districts that have a more traditional management structure.

School leaders identify staff they want for their schools, seek out partnerships with organizations to enhance school life, and select vendors to provide services from after-school programming to academic tutoring, enrichment, facilities enhancements, technology services, and more. Each school is encouraged to find its unique identity, making it an appealing option for families in the neighborhood and—in the case of many middle schools, all high schools, and most charter schools in Baltimore—across the city.

Meanwhile, the district office takes on the role of ensuring that the portfolio as a whole succeeds in making high-quality academic programming accessible for Baltimore's students, no matter where they live or what their needs, talents, and interests. This means monitoring and promoting the success of individual students and schools; it also means applying an equity lens by considering whether specific student populations and specific geographic areas are equitably served with a range of high-quality elementary, middle, and high school options.

Following a blueprint for success

In Fall 2017, City Schools introduced a comprehensive approach to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education that meets their needs and interests. The district's blueprint for success focuses on three key areas:

Student wholeness. Our students are unique people with unique experiences, talents, challenges, and social, emotional, and physical lives. By keeping the wholeness of our students in mind, meeting their needs, hearing their voices, and building partnerships with their families and communities, we can ignite their passion for learning.

Literacy. Our students want and deserve literacy in its fullest sense. This means understanding and analyzing spoken and written texts from fiction and poetry to speeches, primary source documents in history, scientific research papers, news reports, opinion pieces, and more. It involves synthesizing information from multiple sources and subjects to solve real-world problems. It includes understanding modes of expression that are appropriate in different settings and harnessing them to create clear, compelling, and powerful written and spoken texts of all kinds, from evidence-based essays to oral presentations to creative works in print and online.

Staff leadership. High-performing education systems around the world emphasize the professionalism of highly qualified teachers and have systems in place to encourage professional learning that focuses on the curriculum teachers teach. They work to develop leaders at all levels and ensure that collaboration, coaching, and mentoring are an essential part of the work day. In schools, this prioritizing of leadership and continuous professional growth contributes to a culture where staff and students alike know that learning is valued and celebrated.

These areas are intertwined: If students are motivated to learn, have the foundational skills to think critically, analyze deeply, and express themselves powerfully, and have adults around them who encourage them to excel, they will be able to move steadily toward high school graduation and postsecondary success.

All traditional (noncharter) schools are beginning to implement the blueprint in 2017-18, with targeted professional development and resources in each area. In addition, 55 schools selected through an application process will serve as "intensive learning sites" for work in literacy or student wholeness. These schools will serve as models for other schools in the portfolio, providing support as the blueprint is fully implemented over the next five years.



Pursuing and achieving equity

Baltimore is an increasingly diverse city, whose public school students come from different family backgrounds and home structures, socioeconomic situations, races, and experiences. School-based staff are committed to knowing the diversity of their students, so they can engage and support each individual.

Equality provides

the same to each student,

but at City Schools,

the emphasis is on *equity*—

providing what each

student needs.

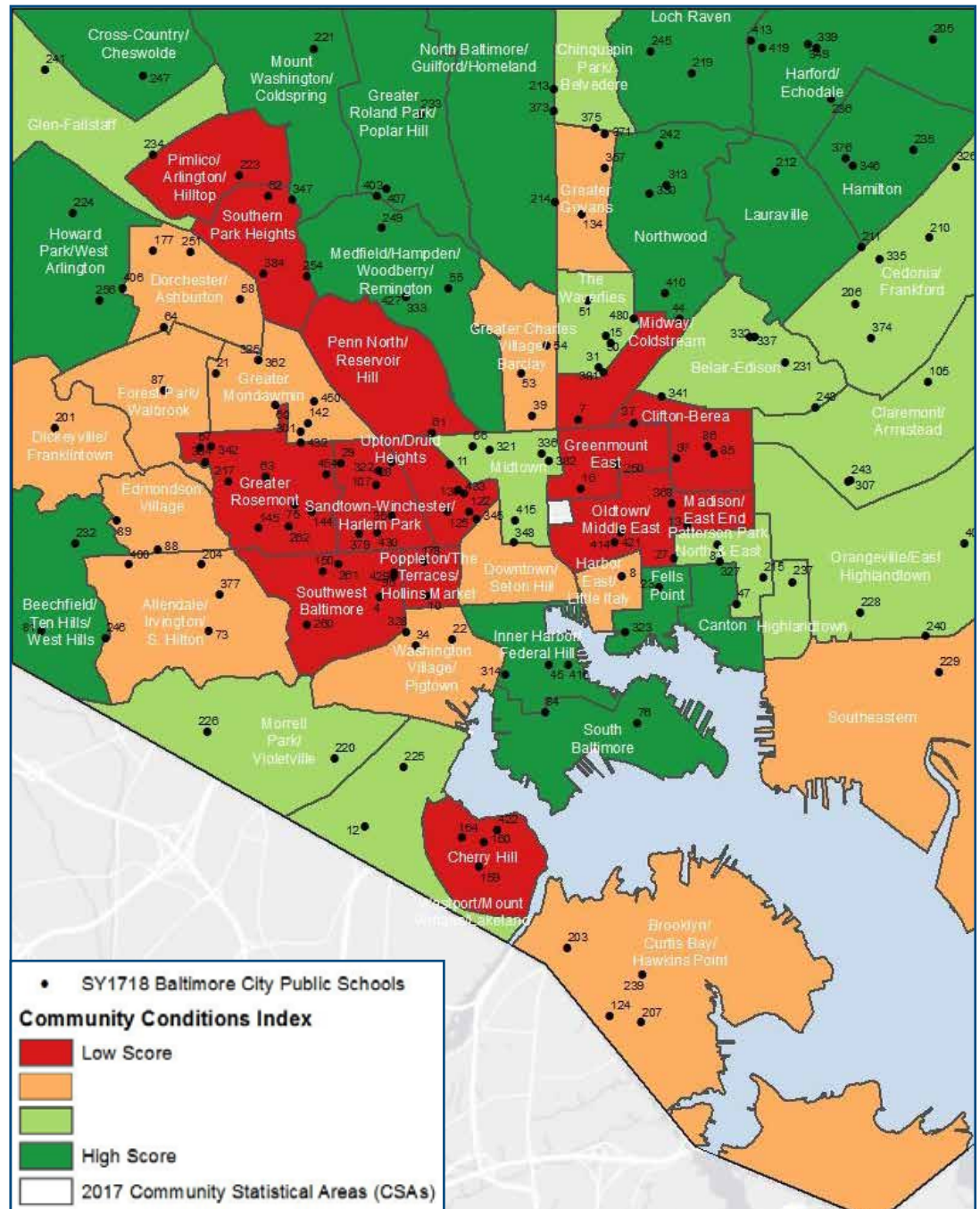


It is also important for school and district staff to understand the neighborhoods and communities where our students spend significant parts of their out-of-school time, shaping who they are. Since 2016-17, district staff have been honing a **Community Conditions Index** that groups Baltimore City’s communities based on three measures:

1. Disparity (poverty rate, median household income)
2. Access to resources (availability of healthy food, access to a vehicle)
3. Neighborhood stability and safety (crime, vacant homes)

The index identifies neighborhoods by differing investments in social, financial, and other assets. Intersecting the index with City Schools’ facilities investment, academic programming, and student achievement can provide insight about the equitable distribution of resources. For example, in locating new sites for gifted and advanced learning, district staff used the Community Conditions Index to determine whether neighborhoods across the index range have access to this programming.

Recognizing that school location is an important consideration for most families when students are making middle and high school choices, City Schools is also now looking at how school options are distributed across neighborhoods and demographics. Working with experts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, district staff are **modeling school demand** to determine whether new programs or policies are needed to ensure equity in access to middle and high school options.





City Schools Snapshot, 2017-18

In 2017-18, City Schools' portfolio includes 177 schools and programs.

- 1 school for pre-k and kindergarten
- 48 elementary schools, including 4 charters, 5 neighborhood charters, and 1 separate public day school
- 76 elementary/middle schools, including 12 charters (1 of which serves all boys), 3 neighborhood charters, 1 contract school, and 1 separate public day school
- 7 middle schools, including 4 charters; 1 charter serves all boys and 1 serves all girls
- 14 middle/high schools, including 3 charters and 2 separate public day schools; 1 citywide school serves all boys and 1 charter serves all girls
- 24 high schools, including 3 charters, 1 contract school, and 1 separate public day school; 1 citywide school serves all girls
- 1 separate public day elementary/middle/high school
- 6 programs serving students across ages and grades

City Schools: A Portfolio District

Types of schools

Neighborhood elementary and elementary/middle schools serve families who live in a particular geographic area close to the school building.

“Citywide” middle schools and middle school programs are available to all students, regardless of where they live. Fifth-grade students can choose to attend a citywide middle school or apply for citywide programs that have academic entrance criteria.

“Citywide” high schools are also available to all students. City Schools has no “zoned” high schools, and all 8th-grade students choose the schools they wish to attend. Some high schools have entrance criteria.

Charter schools are operated by independent nonprofit organizations and frequently offer a particular instructional approach or special programming. They are open to all students and hold entrance lotteries when there are more interested students than available seats.

Neighborhood charter schools (also called “zoned” or “conversion” charters) serve families who live close to the school. If there is room, they accept students from outside the school’s attendance zone, holding an entrance lottery if there are more interested out-of-zone students than available seats.

Contract schools are similar to charter schools, but are governed by a contract with the district rather than a charter granted under the state’s charter school law. These schools may have entrance criteria or they may hold entrance lotteries if there are more interested students than available seats.

Separate public day schools serve students with disabilities whose needs can be met only in a specialized setting.

Alternative programs provide extra support for students who may have experienced challenges or circumstances that have caused them to fall off track.

School configurations

The way a school is set up—the grades or populations it serves—has a big impact on the learning environment it provides. For example, City Schools’ middle school students can attend 6th to 8th grade in settings that provide different types of support and different atmospheres for learning:

- In elementary/middle schools, young children begin at age 4 or 5 and grow into adolescence in the same educational environment, leaving when they’re ready to begin high school, usually around age 14.
- In middle schools serving only 6th to 8th grade, students experience a stand-alone step between the elementary and secondary years.
- At middle/high schools serving grades 6 to 12, the transition from middle grades to high school can be more seamless.

The flexibility of the portfolio approach also allows the district to consider other grade configurations which, based on certain factors and individual school needs, can provide opportunities for more focused instruction and greater concentration of resources. For example, in 2018-19, City Schools will open a new building for Arundel

Elementary School, serving pre-k to grade 2 in the city’s southwest; nearby Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School, now being completely renovated, will serve grades 3 to 8. This pairing of an early learning center and a school for upper elementary through middle grades, established with extensive input from the Cherry Hill community, will allow teachers and other school staff to focus on the distinct learning needs of children in these two distinct age groups.

The portfolio also includes schools that serve only girls, only boys, and both.

School programming

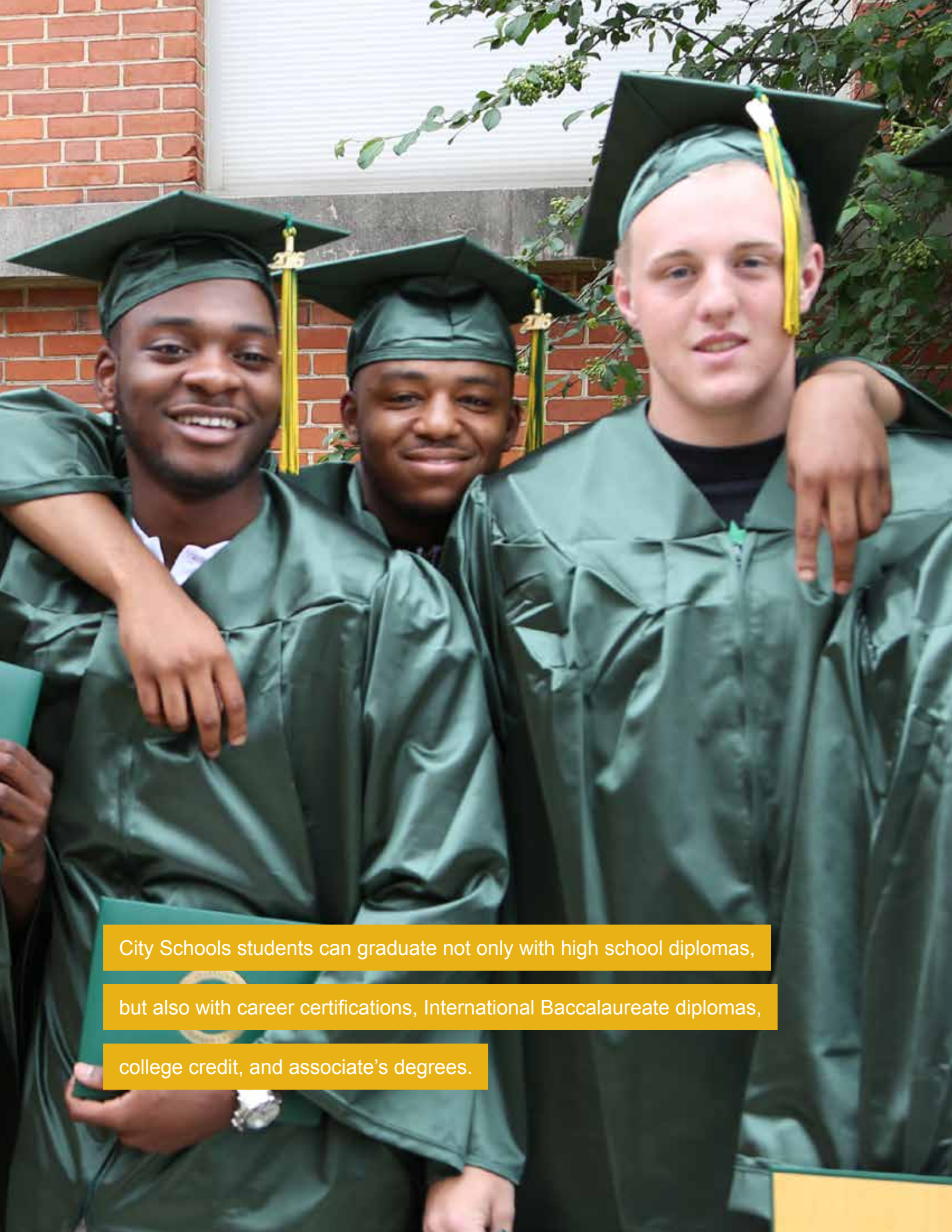
Supported by the range of school types and configurations, the district’s schools also offer a range of programs.

Schools follow numerous pedagogical approaches, from project-based learning to Montessori to Expeditionary Learning. International Baccalaureate programs are available at elementary, middle, and high school levels. There are schools with curricular emphases on STEM (science, technology, engineering, math), the arts, and Career and Technology Education (CTE). One school offers language immersion, where students not only learn Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, or French, they learn *in* those languages—gaining bilingual language skills and skills across academic areas at the same time.

Gifted and Advanced Learning

Over the past several years, City Schools has moved decisively to expand access to curricula and content for gifted and advanced learners. The district now has more than 50 elementary and middle schools with specialized gifted and advanced learning (GAL) programs, including 17 Title I schools in economically disadvantaged communities. Seven of the district’s GAL sites have been recognized for excellence by the state.

In 2016, City Schools screened all 2nd-grade students for exceptional ability, and in 2017 the district implemented universal screening of all kindergarten students. Of the approximately 11,000 students who have now been screened, just under 5 percent have been formally identified as gifted, advanced, or eligible for talent development programs as a result of ability testing combined with nationally normed measures of achievement, motivation, and creativity.



City Schools students can graduate not only with high school diplomas, but also with career certifications, International Baccalaureate diplomas, college credit, and associate's degrees.

Net Zero Buildings

The new Holabird and Graceland Park/O'Donnell Heights buildings will be “net zero”—designed and built so the amount of energy generated on site over the course of one year equals the amount of energy consumed in the building. In addition to CIP funds, the district received grants from the Maryland Energy Administration toward construction of these two new energy-efficient buildings. The buildings' systems and equipment will minimize energy use, and the school community will receive professional development about their energy-saving features.

Addressing Low “Utilization”

At one time, City Schools served more than 100,000 students; with the decline in Baltimore's population over the past several decades, school enrollment has also declined. Overall, the district's current “utilization rate” for all its buildings is approximately 82 percent, though it is somewhat higher among elementary and elementary/middle schools and significantly lower in middle, middle/high, and high schools.

Under the 21st Century School Buildings Plan, the district is required to increase building utilization and to vacate 26 school buildings and return them to the city for disposition. While it is possible to change the buildings originally identified to be vacated (Exhibit 6 of the memorandum of understanding), the number cannot decrease.

School buildings

City Schools has among the oldest school buildings in the state, many with outdated heating systems and no air conditioning, plumbing that requires frequent maintenance and repair, and classrooms that lack the wiring to support computers, let alone the state-of-the-art labs and collaborative spaces needed for 21st-century learning.

But to achieve at their maximum potential, we know that students need

- Learning spaces that enable innovative, high-quality instruction
- A physical infrastructure that supports use of current technology and ensures safety and security
- A healthy environment for learning, with good air quality, lighting, heating and ventilation, and water that is safe to drink
- Schools that are integrated into their communities, providing resources and support that extend beyond the school day

This is why within the district's portfolio, City Schools works not only to ensure that families have a range of strong programmatic options to choose from but also that steadily increasing numbers of school communities have access to new or renovated buildings. The district has also been working steadily to upgrade and improve its older facilities.

In 2013, after several years of advocacy by City Schools stakeholders, legislation was passed to support funding for the **21st Century School Buildings Plan** to bring new and renovated school buildings to Baltimore City. In Fall 2017, the first two buildings—Fort Worthington Elementary/Middle School in east Baltimore and Frederick Elementary School on the west side—opened for students, and seven more buildings are scheduled to open by the first day of the 2018-19 school year.

City Schools has more buildings than are funded for construction under the current 21st-century plan, and many of them are in need of upgrading. District staff meets several times a year to evaluate existing buildings, identify needs, and prioritize projects. Each year, the most critical systemic upgrades are included in the district's **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)** submission to the state, along with requests for major renovations and replacement buildings.

Community Resources, Community Schools

Baltimore's communities all have strengths and assets to contribute to the success of the city's young people. Community schools seek out those resources in neighborhoods and bring together a wide range of partners and community resources to promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning, and the well-being of families and communities.

City Schools' community school strategy integrates academics with health services, youth development, expanded learning opportunities, and family and community supports to ensure students have what they need to learn. The strategy works to establish and support community schools that are inclusive, equitable, and effective in promoting children's success, particularly those who live in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.

In 2017-18, City Schools has 50 community schools.

Funding from the State of Maryland for the CIP comes from the Public School Construction Program on an annual basis. Funds are requested for specific projects, which must meet strict standards defined by state regulations. City Schools' CIP is currently funding upgrades to heating and air-conditioning systems, windows and doors, roofs, and other systemic projects. Also funded under the CIP are construction of replacement buildings for Holabird and Graceland Park/O'Donnell Heights elementary/middle schools, with occupancy scheduled for the 2019-20 school year, and renovations and an addition for Armistead Gardens Elementary/Middle School, with occupancy scheduled for 2021-22. All three schools currently occupy outdated, overcrowded buildings in poor condition in the city's southeast.

In recent years, City Schools has also benefited from **community partnerships** that have brought volunteers and resources to building upgrades and beautification projects. For example, the Weinberg Foundation's Library Project has enlisted numerous organizations and companies in renovations to 14 elementary and elementary/middle school libraries; Heart of America has brought hundreds of volunteers from Under Armour, Target, and other companies and organizations to paint, build, and plant in school buildings and grounds in different parts of the city; and KaBoom has provided new playgrounds.



Rendering of new Lyndhurst Elementary/Middle School building scheduled to open in 2018

THE ANNUAL PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Every year, City Schools reviews its portfolio of schools and programs with a broad range of measures, including

- **Student achievement:** Schoolwide performance on state assessments and academic progress among students as shown by results on districtwide tests, national assessments and, for high schools, graduation rates
- **School climate:** Student attendance, suspensions, enrollment, and dropout rates; data for middle and high schools on how many students selected the schools on their middle and high school choice applications; and school survey results from parents, teachers, and students

These measures are considered within the context of enrollment trends, school size and ability to support robust programming, the range of options for families in a given geographic area, and opportunities for creating new schools or reconfiguring existing ones — for example, by expanding an elementary school to serve elementary and middle grades.

While as part of its overall annual programmatic review the district considers achievement and climate data from all its schools, charter and other schools managed by outside operators also go through review in the year an operator applies to renew its charter or contract. This **renewal review** usually occurs on a three- to five-year cycle and considers academic programming and climate, including suspension practices, attendance, and chronic absence data for all student populations; annual audits, school budget submissions, and grants management to assess the operator's financial management and governance practices; school compliance with laws, rules, policies, and regulations as measures of effective management; the operator's renewal application; and the district's most recent School Effectiveness Review for the school.

In accordance with Board of School Commissioners policy, the Charter and Operator-led School Advisory Board (whose members represent foundations, nonprofit organizations, school choice advocates, school operators, and district staff, and which was formerly known as the New and Charter School Advisory Board) reviews each charter or contract school's renewal materials and makes



recommendations to City Schools' chief executive officer regarding whether the charter or contract should be renewed for five years, renewed for three years, or not renewed. The CEO considers these recommendations and in turn makes recommendations to the Board of School Commissioners as part of the annual portfolio review; the Board of School Commissioners then votes on the CEO's recommendations.

The renewal process generates ratings ("highly effective," "effective," "developing," or "not effective") on measures in the following categories:

- Academics (at least 50 percent of an operator's overall rating)
- Climate
- Financial management and governance

Because attending school in a building that supports best practices in teaching and learning for the 21st century is part of a high-quality educational experience, the annual portfolio review also has a **buildings component**. Under the terms of state legislation passed in 2013, the 21st Century School Buildings Plan is overseen by four partners—City Schools, the Maryland Stadium Authority, the City of Baltimore, and the state's Interagency Committee on School Construction—and governed under terms of a memorandum of understanding (MOU). As part of its portfolio review, City Schools revisits the plan each year, adjusting it based on updated information and data, changes and developments in the intervening years, and construction requirements as implementation moves forward.

Ultimately, the goal of the buildings component of the annual portfolio review is to make allowable adjustments within the 21st Century School Buildings Plan and the Capital Improvement Program, ensuring access to updated facilities for as many students as possible.

Looking at School Effectiveness

Every three to four years, schools go through a School Effectiveness Review. This review helps schools identify strengths and weaknesses in order to contribute to school-based planning and budgeting, and it helps the district office know how schools are performing in order to guide decision making related to support and accountability.

The review process involves classroom visits, focus group sessions, and document review that results in ratings of "highly effective," "effective," "developing," or "not effective" in four areas:

- **Highly effective instruction**, with actions including planning and delivering instruction, using data to inform instruction, and creating effective environments for learning
- **Talented people**, focused on systems to select, retain, evaluate, and develop effective staff in all positions
- **Vision and engagement**, including creating a safe and supportive environment and communicating effectively with families and other stakeholders
- **Strategic leadership**, with actions designed to set and achieve growth goals

Recommendations from the review

The annual review results in recommendations that inform decision making about the portfolio, both in the short term for the following school year as well as for longer term planning. It can result, for example, in identification of the need to develop stronger academic programming—perhaps an expansion of Career and Technology Education to make more pathways accessible to students in different areas of the city or introduction of new programming, such as early college opportunities. It also brings to the surface schools that can serve as models for others in the district because of their strengths or schools that need additional supports because of specific areas of concern.

In the shorter term, the portfolio review lists recommendations that are presented to the Board of School Commissioners, either as information items or for vote. These recommendations may include the following.

Creation of new schools. In the early implementation of the portfolio approach, the district created several new schools to fill specific areas of need. Most recently, new schools approved to open have been charter or contract schools (approval for which follows a process outside of the annual presentation of portfolio review recommendations).

At present, new school creation focuses on “re-creation,” with the merging of school communities as they prepare to move into newly constructed or renovated buildings under the 21st Century School Buildings Plan. For example, as a result of the portfolio review conducted in Fall 2015, the Board of School Commissioners voted to close Westside Elementary School. But instead of simply redrawing school zone boundaries to assign students to different schools, a plan was developed to merge the Westside and John Eager Howard Elementary School communities. In January 2018, the new school will open in an enlarged and renovated building—and it will have a new name, Dorothy I. Height Elementary School, selected by the new school community.

This is one example of how the portfolio approach considers schools not in isolation, but within clusters of inter-related recommendations. As schools move into their new buildings, they take steps to mark those changes—through, for example, displays of artifacts from nearby closed schools or inclusion

of aspects of those schools’ customs and climate in their own—as well as introducing new programming to meet the needs of a changing student population and school community.

School relocation. Part of using resources effectively means ensuring that school programs are located in school buildings that can be operated and maintained at a sustainable level. This may require the co-location of more than one program in a single building or the relocation of a program to a building of a more appropriate size, configuration, and condition.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, two schools are recommended for relocation:

- Bluford Drew Jemison STEM Academy West, to the Harlem Park building
- Stadium School, to the Coldstream Park building

The CEO is also considering relocating the Elementary/Middle Alternative Program that serves elementary students experiencing behavioral issues and middle school students who have fallen behind their peers. These students attend this program temporarily while continuing to be enrolled in home schools. Currently located in the Harlem Park building, the program would move to high-quality portable units on the campus of the Elmer A. Henderson school. Because this is a program (not a school), this relocation can be made at the CEO’s discretion and does not require approval by the Board of School Commissioners.

A New Model for Improving Struggling Schools

Hands-on, collaborative learning for real purposes is usually the most successful kind of learning—for adults as well as children.

In a new model for 2017-18, Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle School, which successfully improved student performance, is serving as a lab school for Harford Heights Elementary School, James McHenry Elementary/Middle, and Mary E. Rodman Elementary, three low-performing schools where new principals and staff members are now working to implement rigorous improvement plans.

Supported by funds from the School Improvement Grant, the “100% Project” is providing critical support to expand the capacity of the three schools’ leadership teams and replicate and scale the strategic school-reform interventions achieved at Commodore—and put 100% of students on the path to college.



Reconfiguring schools. As previously noted, the portfolio review can lead to recommendations to reconfigure existing schools—for example, adding middle grades to an elementary school or removing middle grades from an elementary/middle school. These recommendations can be made to ensure adequate enrollment and building utilization as well as to strengthen academic programs.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, the following schools are recommended for grade reconfiguration:

- Calverton Elementary/Middle School, now serving pre-k to grade 8, to serve grades 3 to 8
- James Mosher Elementary School, now serving pre-k to grade 5, to serve pre-k to grade 2
- Lois T. Murray Elementary/Middle School, now serving pre-k to grade 8, to serve pre-k to grade 5
- New Era Academy, now serving grades 6 to 12, to serve grades 9 to 12

(The reconfigurations of Calverton and James Mosher schools were approved by the Board of School Commissioners at its public meeting on October 10, 2017.)

In addition, it is recommended that the reconfiguration of Arlington Elementary/Middle School (to become an elementary school serving up to grade 5) take effect in 2019-20, rather than the previously approved 2018-19.

Operator renewals. The outcome of the review for operator-run schools whose contracts or charters are up for renewal is included in the annual portfolio review and voted on by the Board of School Commissioners. Schools may be recommended for a five-year renewal, the maximum term; a three-year renewal, which indicates positive results overall but room for improvement in one or more key areas; or non-renewal. In the latter case, the school may then become a traditional or citywide school within the district or may be recommended for closure.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, the following charter schools went through the renewal process (see subsequent sections for renewal recommendations):

- Afya Public Charter School
- Baltimore International Academy
- Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women
- Banneker Blake Academy for Arts and Sciences
- City Neighbors Charter School
- Creative City Public Charter School
- The Crossroads School
- Empowerment Academy
- Hampstead Hill Academy
- Independence School Local I High
- Midtown Academy
- Patterson Park Public Charter School
- Southwest Baltimore Public Charter School

Buildings plan amendments. As part of the MOU among the partners in the 21st Century School Buildings Plan, decisions affecting the plan must be reviewed and documented. In addition, when school buildings are vacated or school programs are relocated, a formal state-approved process must be conducted to solicit community input prior to the Board voting on the recommendation.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, the following changes are proposed for the 21st Century School Buildings Plan:

- Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson building, currently scheduled to be surplus to the City of Baltimore in 2018, to be retained for an additional two years (until 2020)
- Northwestern building, currently scheduled to be surplus to the City of Baltimore in 2019, to be retained for an additional two years (until 2021)

Closing schools. The most difficult recommendation to make as part of the annual portfolio review is the recommendation to close a school program. Even if the recommendation has been anticipated, it nevertheless causes disruption to students, staff, and families, a sense of loss in communities, and anxiety and adjustment for all affected.

Nevertheless, faced with the reality of limited resources that hinder the ability to pay for and provide robust academic programming, under-used school buildings, programs that struggle to support student success, and obligations to meet commitments under the buildings plan and as good stewards of public resources, City Schools must make recommendations to close schools as warranted. In all cases, the district works hard to ensure that



Building Capacity and Student Enrollment

Schools with small student populations struggle with too few dollars to deliver the robust academic programming and supports that contribute to student achievement. On the other hand, schools with too many students can mean less individualized attention. Student enrollment also has an impact on facilities, with dollars expended to maintain buildings that are not fully in use or to provide portables and address heightened maintenance demands in buildings that are beyond their capacity.

This is why enrollment and neighborhood demographic trends are considered in the district's annual review. In making enrollment projections, the district takes into account historical trends, patterns in middle and high school choice, and construction plans already in place, along with state and local data on things like birth rate, housing construction activity, and neighborhood revitalization plans. Recommendations made as part of the annual portfolio review can include rezoning for neighborhood elementary and elementary/middle schools to address the ability to provide robust academic programming or over and under use of buildings, particularly when other recommendations include a plan to open, close, or reconfigure nearby schools.

After years of "spot rezoning," City Schools is now undertaking a study to determine how school zoning could be approached comprehensively to benefit students, schools, and communities. Stakeholder feedback about values and priorities for rezoning was gathered in Spring 2017, and next steps in the study will be outlined in Fall/Winter 2017-18.

students, staff, families, and communities served by those schools have opportunities to provide feedback and for stakeholders to advocate for their schools. This is a requirement not only of the law, but of district policy and practice. Should the closure recommendation be accepted by the Board of School Commissioners, the district also works hard to ensure that the needs of affected students are met in their school placements for subsequent years.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, the following schools are recommended to close as of Summer 2018:

- Coldstream Park Elementary/Middle School
- Friendship Academy of Engineering and Technology
- Knowledge and Success Academy (KASA)
- William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle School

In addition, previous recommendations for closures are reaffirmed for Board approval in the 2017-18 portfolio review:

- Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson Elementary/Middle School, to close as of Summer 2018 (with building surplus in 2020)
- Rognel Heights Elementary/Middle School, to close as of Summer 2018 (with building surplus in 2018)

Building surplus. When a school program closes or moves to another building, the original building is sometimes maintained by City Schools for use as a temporary location ("swing space") for other school programs being affected by the 21st Century School Buildings Plan. Once the building is no longer needed, it is surplus to the City of Baltimore.

In the 2017-18 portfolio review, the following buildings are recommended to be surplus to the City of Baltimore in Summer 2018:

- Patapsco building
- Westside building



The remaining sections of this report provide more details regarding the recommendations arising from this year's review of City Schools' portfolio of schools, including a summary of each recommendation, data and rationales for each, and opportunities for public feedback. For more information, visit City Schools' website at www.baltimorecityschools.org or call 410-545-1870.

RECOMMENDED PORTFOLIO ACTIONS

	School Program / Building	Program Recommendation	Building Recommendation
Relocation	Bluford Drew Jemison STEM Academy West / Walbrook building	Relocate to the Harlem Park building	Retain for future use
	Stadium School / Abbottson building	Relocate to Coldstream Park building	Enable Abbottston Elementary School to occupy the entire building
Reconfiguration	Arlington Elementary/Middle School	Retain grades 6 to 8 until the end of the 2018-19 school year	No new recommendation
	Calverton Elementary/Middle School*	Reconfigure to serve grades 3 to 8	No new recommendation
	James Mosher Elementary School*	Reconfigure to serve pre-k to grade 2	No new recommendation
	Lois T. Murray Elementary/Middle School	Reconfigure to serve pre-k to grade 5	No new recommendation
	New Era Academy	Reconfigure to serve grades 9 to 12	No new recommendation
Operator Renewals	Afya Public Charter School	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Baltimore International Academy	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women	5-year renewal	No new recommendation
	Banneker Blake Academy for Arts and Sciences / Winston building	Pending additional school information	No new recommendation
	City Neighbors Charter School	3-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Creative City Public Charter School	3-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	The Crossroads School	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)

* The reconfigurations of Calverton and James Mosher schools were approved by the Board of School Commissioners at its public meeting on October 10, 2017.

	School Program / Building	Program Recommendation	Building Recommendation
Operator Renewals, continued	Empowerment Academy	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Hampstead Hill Academy	5-year renewal	No new recommendation
	Independence School Local I High / Robert Poole building	Nonrenewal and closure	Retain for future use
	Midtown Academy	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Patterson Park Public Charter School	5-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
	Southwest Baltimore Public Charter School	3-year renewal	No recommendation (not in a district-owned building)
Buildings Plan Amendments	Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson building	Close effective Summer 2018	Surplus in 2020
	Northwestern building	Not applicable	Delay surplus until 2021
Closures	Coldstream Park Elementary/ Middle School	Close effective Summer 2018	Retain to house Stadium School
	Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson Elementary/Middle School	Close effective Summer 2018	Surplus in 2020
	Friendship Academy of Engineering and Technology / Professional Development building	Close effective Summer 2018	Retain for use by Professional Development Center and NACA Freedom and Democracy II
	KASA (Knowledge and Success Academy) / Walbrook building	Close effective Summer 2018	Retain for future use
	Rognel Heights Elementary/Middle School	Close effective Summer 2018	Surplus in summer 2018
	William Pinderhughes Elementary/ Middle School / Kelson building	Close effective Summer 2018	Retain for future use
Building Surpluses	Patapsco building	Not applicable	Surplus in 2018
	Westside building	Not applicable	Surplus in 2018

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Relocations

Additional details regarding each of the recommended program relocations can be found in the appendix.

Bluford Drew Jemison STEM Academy West / Walbrook building

Recommendation

Program: Relocate to the Harlem Park building in Summer 2018

Building: Retain for future use

Bluford Drew Jemison STEM Academy West (BDJ West) serves an all-male student population in grades 6 to 12, and is the only all-male high school option in City Schools' portfolio. It is currently co-located in the Walbrook building with KASA, a program recommended to close in summer 2018. If that recommendation is approved, the Walbrook building would be significantly under-utilized. Relocation of this school program to co-locate with Augusta Fells Savage Institute for Visual Arts in the Harlem Park building keeps the BDJ West option on the west side, increases utilization of the Harlem Park building, and makes the Walbrook building available for future use by appropriately sized school programs.

Stadium School / Abbottston building

Recommendation

Program: Relocate to the Coldstream Park building in Summer 2018

Building: Retain for continued use by Abbottston Elementary School

Stadium School is a stand-alone middle school option and gifted and advanced learning (GAL) program site on the city's east side. In its current co-location with Abbottston Elementary School, it has no room to increase enrollment; at the same time, Abbottston, an elementary school that offers GAL, is also unable to grow. If the recommendation to close nearby Coldstream Park Elementary/Middle School is approved, relocation of Stadium School to the Coldstream Park building will enable both Stadium and Abbottston to grow, giving them more resources to further improve their programming for students.

Reconfigurations

Arlington Elementary/Middle School

Recommendation

Program: Retain grades 6 to 8 through the 2018-19 school year

Building: No new recommendation (renovate with an addition)

As part of the 2014-15 portfolio review, the Board of School Commissioners approved reconfiguring Arlington as an elementary school, serving pre-k to grade 5 beginning in the 2018-19 school year; students who would have attended Arlington in grades 6 to 8 would instead attend nearby Pimlico Elementary/Middle School. This year's recommendation is to delay that reconfiguration for one year.

The initial 2014-15 recommendation was based on construction schedules at the time, which anticipated completion of renovations of both the Pimlico and Arlington buildings for the 2018-19 school year. Current schedules have Pimlico opening for students in 2018-19, with Arlington following a year later. With the new timing, Arlington is now recommended to continue serving pre-k to grade 8 for an additional year, to allow transition planning and student recruitment for both Arlington and Pimlico.

Calverton Elementary/Middle School James Mosher Elementary School

Recommendation

Program: Reconfigure Calverton to serve grades 3 to 8; reconfigure James Mosher to serve pre-k to grade 2

Building: No new recommendation (renovate both buildings)

As part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan, Calverton Elementary/Middle School and James Mosher Elementary School will be renovated; as part of the recommendations included in the original plan, nearby Alexander Hamilton Elementary School will close when those renovations are complete, with students rezoned to Calverton or Mosher. Reconfiguring Mosher as an early learning center serving pre-k to grade 2 and Calverton as an elementary/middle school serving grades 3 to 8 will allow both schools to focus on specialized instruction to meet the needs of children at distinct ages, leading to improved student outcomes and increased opportunities for teacher collaboration and professional growth. Both schools would have sufficient enrollment to support robust programming.

Note that the reconfigurations of Calverton and James Mosher schools were approved by the Board of School Commissioners at its public meeting on October 10, 2017.

Lois T. Murray Elementary/Middle School

Recommendation

Program: Reconfigure to serve pre-k to grade 5 beginning in the 2018-19 school year

Building: No new recommendation (vacate, with program relocation to the Walter P. Carter building)

Lois T. Murray Elementary/Middle School is a separate public day school serving students with special needs from pre-k to grade 8. As part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan, the school is recommended to relocate to the Walter P. Carter building, once construction there is complete. With discontinuation of the middle grades program, the school will be of the appropriate size for its new location. Middle school students whose needs must be met in a separate public day school setting will be able to attend the Claremont School.

New Era Academy

Recommendation

Program: Reconfigure to serve grades 9 to 12 beginning in the 2018-19 school year

Building: No new recommendation

New Era Academy is a middle/high school located in the Cherry Hill neighborhood of southwest Baltimore. The school has had a small middle grades population for a number of years, too low to support robust academic programming. Additionally, as part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan, middle grades students who live in the neighborhood will be zoned to the newly renovated Cherry Hill, scheduled to open for students in September 2018. Reconfiguring New Era would allow the school to focus its resources on the unique needs of high school students and on professional development for secondary teachers. Middle grade students will be able to attend Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School or participate in a school choice process to identify a new school for the 2018-19 school year.

Charter renewals

Renewal reports for each school can be found in Appendix A.

Afya Public Charter School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of effective for academics and governance/financial management and highly effective for climate. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Baltimore International Academy

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of effective for academics and climate and highly effective for governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No new recommendation

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of highly effective for academics and effective for climate and governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Banneker Blake Academy for Arts and Sciences / Winston building

Recommendation

Program: Pending

Building: No new recommendation

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of effective for academics, developing for climate, and pending for governance/financial management.

Banneker Blake Academy opened with a 3-year contract in the 2014-15 school year. As such, limited financial data were available for review in this year's portfolio review. In order to ascertain more fully the financial position of the school, a recommendation regarding this program will be made after completion of an audit of 2016-17 fiscal year data. That recommendation will be brought to the Board of School Commissioners for consideration as early as possible in 2018.

City Neighbors Charter School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 3-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of developing for academics, highly effective for climate, and effective for governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 3-year term.

Creative City Public Charter School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 3-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of developing for academics and effective for climate and governance/financial management. Based on the ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 3-year term.

The Crossroads School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of effective for academics and climate and highly effective for governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Empowerment Academy

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of effective for academics, climate, and governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Hampstead Hill Academy

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No new recommendation

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of highly effective for academics, climate, and governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Independence School Local I High / Robert Poole building

Recommendation

Program: Do not renew; close program effective June 30, 2018

Building: Retain for future use

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of developing for academics, climate, and governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends that the charter for this school not be renewed.

Independence School Local I is currently in a temporary location in the William Lemmel building, while its permanent location in the Robert Poole building is renovated as part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan; the Poole building will also house the Academy for College and Career Exploration (ACCE). The space being renovated for Independence School Local I is flexible and will be used for ACCE if the recommendation for nonrenewal is approved and Independence School Local I closes.

Midtown Academy

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of highly effective for academics and climate and effective for governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Patterson Park Public Charter School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 5-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of highly effective for academics and climate and effective for governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 5-year term.

Southwest Baltimore Public Charter School

Recommendation

Program: Renew operator's charter for a 3-year term

Building: No recommendation (not in a City Schools building)

The renewal review of the school's operator generated ratings of developing for academics and effective for climate and governance/financial management. Based on these ratings, City Schools' CEO recommends renewing the operator's charter for a 3-year term.

Amendments to the 21st Century School Buildings Plan

Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson building

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Surplus in 2020

See details of this recommendation in the Program Closure section on page 23.

Northwestern building

Recommendation

Program: Not applicable

Building: Delay surplus until 2021

The Northwestern High School program closed in Summer 2017. In 2017-18, the Northwestern building has served as a temporary location for Forest Park High School, which will move back to its permanent home when construction is finished for the 2018-19 school year. Current construction schedules indicate a need for access to temporary locations for other schools in the 21st-century plan. It is therefore recommended that the Northwestern building be surplus to the City of Baltimore in 2021, rather than the originally planned 2019.

Program closures (and building surplus, where applicable)

Additional details regarding each of the recommended closures and building surplus can be found in Appendix B.

Coldstream Park Elementary/Middle School

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Retain to house Stadium School

Coldstream Park Elementary/Middle School is a low-performing school located in northeast Baltimore. Meanwhile, nearby Abbottston Elementary School and Stadium School are more successful and more popular programs, but cannot grow because

their current shared location in the Abbottston building has insufficient space for increased enrollment. Closing the Coldstream Park Elementary/Middle School program and relocating Stadium School to the Coldstream building will allow Stadium to grow and Abbottston to grow and expand its zone. Elementary students currently zoned to Coldstream Park will be zoned to Abbottston, while middle school students will attend Stadium School or select from other options through the middle school choice process.

Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson Elementary/Middle School

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Surplus to the City of Baltimore in 2020

As part of the 2013-14 portfolio review, the Board of School Commissioners approved the closure of one elementary/middle school in the Cherry Hill neighborhood, with grade reconfigurations and building renovations for the remaining two schools. In 2016-17, the Board approved reconfiguring Arundel Elementary/Middle School as an early learning center for pre-k to grade 2 and Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School to serve grades 3 to 8. With a new Arundel building and a renovated Cherry Hill planned to open for students in September 2018, it is recommended that the Board formalize identification of Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson Elementary/Middle School as the closing school in the Cherry Hill neighborhood and move forward with the process to close the school program in summer 2018. Students currently zoned to Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson will be zoned to either Arundel or Cherry Hill, based on grade level.

The original recommendation anticipated surplus of the building at the same time as program closure. Under this new recommendation, the building would be used as a temporary location for other schools undergoing construction as part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan until 2020, when it would be surplus to the City of Baltimore.

Friendship Academy of Engineering and Technology / Professional Development building

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Retain in the district's buildings portfolio

Friendship Academy of Engineering and Technology is a low-performing school that has had challenges in establishing a positive climate for teaching and learning. With several other schools serving grades 6 to 12 in the northeast quadrant of the city, the district has excess seats, particularly at the high school level. It is therefore recommended that Friendship Academy close in summer 2018, with students participating in a school choice process to identify a new school for 2018-19.

The school occupies space in the district's Professional Development Center, which will use the school's classrooms to expand and increase flexibility for professional development programs.

KASA (Knowledge and Success Academy) / Walbrook building

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Retain in the district's buildings portfolio

KASA is a low-performing school that has had challenges in establishing a positive climate for teaching and learning. With several other schools serving grades 6 to 12 on the city's west side, the district has excess seats, particularly at the high school level. It is therefore recommended that KASA close in summer 2018, with students participating in a school choice process to identify a new school for 2018-19.

KASA currently shares space in the Walbrook building with Bluford Drew Jemison STEM Academy West, which is recommended to relocate to the Harlem Park building. If these two recommendations are approved, the district will be able to retain a large building in relatively good condition on the city's west side for future educational use.

Rognel Heights Elementary/Middle School

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Surplus to the City of Baltimore in Summer 2018

In January 2013 as part of the original 21st Century School Buildings Plan, the Board of School Commissioners approved a recommendation to close Rognel Heights Elementary/Middle School and give students the opportunity to attend a renovated Lyndhurst Elementary/Middle School. With Lyndhurst scheduled to open early in 2018, it is recommended that the Board move forward with the process to close the Rognel Heights Elementary/Middle School program and surplus its building to the City of Baltimore.

William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle School / Kelson building

Recommendation

Program: Close effective Summer 2018

Building: Retain for future use

Both William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle School and nearby Gilmor Elementary School have insufficient students to sustain robust programming. By closing Pinderhughes and rezoning some of its students to Gilmor, the latter school can strengthen its programming and improve outcomes for students. Since the Gilmor building does not have sufficient capacity for all students from Pinderhughes, it is anticipated that rezoning would also include changing boundaries for nearby Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School to receive some Pinderhughes students. Pinderhughes students currently in the middle grades will participate in a school choice process to select a new school for 2018-19.

The Kelson building, which currently houses William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle School, will be retained for use as a temporary location for schools that are part of the 21st Century School Buildings Plan.

Building surpluses

Patapsco building

Recommendation

Program: Not applicable

Building: Surplus in Summer 2018

The Patapsco building was vacated after Patapsco Elementary/Middle School closed in June 2013. The building was used as swing space for schools affected by the 21st Century School Buildings Plan and is no longer needed. Surplusing the building to the city reduces excess square footage in the district's portfolio and reduces maintenance and utility costs.

Westside building

Recommendation

Program: Not applicable

Building: Surplus in Summer 2018

The Westside building was vacated after Westside Elementary School closed in June 2016. The building was used as swing space for schools affected by the 21st Century School Buildings Plan and is no longer needed. Surplusing the building to the city reduces excess square footage in the district's portfolio and reduces maintenance and utility costs.

Opportunities for Public Feedback

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners will hold a state-mandated public hearing and a special work session regarding schools recommended for relocation or closure and buildings scheduled for surplus out of the district's buildings portfolio. The public will have the opportunity to comment on all recommendations from this year's review of the school portfolio.

Special session for public testimony
Tuesday, November 28, 2017
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Public hearing
Tuesday, December 12, 2017
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Both the session and the hearing will be held at the district's administrative office at 200 E. North Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21202.

The Board will also accept written comment on these recommendations until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 15, 2017. Please send your comments to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, 200 E. North Avenue, Room 406, Baltimore, MD 21202, or email to portfoliorecommendations@bcps.k12.md.us. In order for the Board legally to accept written comments, the sender must fully identify him- or herself in the submission.

The Board anticipates voting on the recommendations at a special public meeting on Tuesday, December 19, beginning at 6:00 p.m.





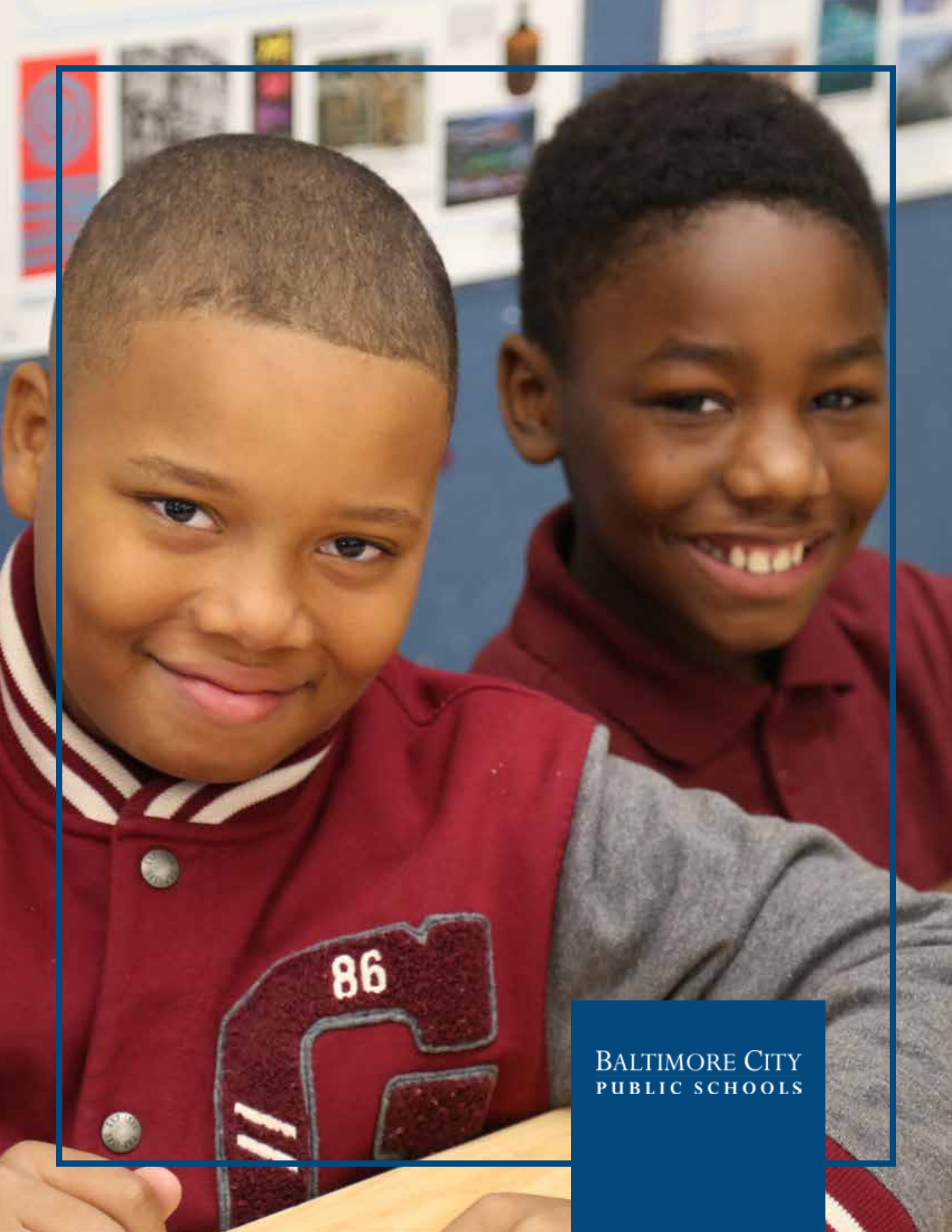
BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

Cheryl A. Casciani, Chair
Peter Kannam, Vice-Chair
Muriel Berkeley
Michelle Harris Bondima
Linda Chinnia
Marnell Cooper
Andrew “Andy” Frank
Tina Hike-Hubbard
Martha James-Hassan
Ashley Peña, Student Commissioner
A.J. Bellido de Luna, Board Executive Officer

Baltimore City Public Schools’ Notice of Nondiscrimination

Baltimore City Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or age in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups.

For inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies, please contact: Equal Opportunity Manager, Title IX Coordinator, Equal Employment Opportunity and Title IX Compliance | 200 E. North Avenue | Room 208 | Baltimore, MD 21202 | Phone 410-396-8542 | Fax 410-396-2955



BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS