



SB870: Baltimore City Youth Data Hub – Establishment

Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

February 22, 2022

Position: Support

On behalf of the Board of Baltimore's Promise¹ and its hundreds of community partners across the city's public, private, and nonprofit sectors, we write to express our strong support for SB870, which establishes the Baltimore City Youth Data Hub for the purposes of promoting the well-being of youth and improving access to and cost-efficiency of youth programs.

Baltimore's youth receive services from multiple public agencies and nonprofits. All of these organizations collect data, but there is not a centralized, permanent, and secure infrastructure within the city to facilitate data sharing among agencies that support many of the same youth. This lack of information-sharing prevents Baltimore from strategically, effectively, and equitably meeting its young people's needs. This disjointed approach to service delivery coupled with a lack of transparency, only exacerbates current and historical inequities. We are confident that the data generated by the Baltimore City Youth Data Hub will enable public agencies, youth-program providers, philanthropic collaboratives, and policymakers to understand the complex, interconnected issues facing children and families in Baltimore, identify where systems efforts are duplicated or missing, maximize resource efficiency, and to advance programs and policies that better meet the specific needs of the community.

Many states and cities across the U.S. have established cross-agency integrated data systems, and the Baltimore Youth Data Hub will build on best practices to generate evidenced-based information to improve education, health, housing, employment and other quality of life outcomes for all of our young people.

Working with Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP), a national technical assistance provider, Baltimore's Promise, Baltimore City Schools, and the Mayor's Office participated in a nation-wide cohort training program to build specific plans related to the legal, governance, and operational framework of an integrated data system. The Baltimore Youth Data Hub is being designed to minimize risks to privacy and security as well as the risk of inaction when our youth need us to act. The Hub is being constructed with principles of privacy by design. This means that privacy protections and data ethics are not an afterthought or an add-on but are central to how the entire Data Hub is being designed and implemented. Access to and use of the Baltimore Youth Data Hub will be controlled by a transparent, inclusive governance oversight process.

The Baltimore City Youth Data Hub brings communities, providers, policymakers and researchers into partnership, to make informed decisions as they create and implement programs and policies designed to eliminate disparities and achieve equitable outcomes for the success of Baltimore's youth and families. We urge the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee to give SB870 a favorable report.

¹ Baltimore's Promise is a city-wide collaborative that coordinates strategy, identifies quality programs, supports alignment activities, establishes shared measures for meaningful results, builds public will, and advances policy on behalf of Baltimore City's children and youth.



How will the Baltimore Youth Data Hub Protect Individual's Privacy?

People won't use data they don't trust. The Baltimore Youth Data Hub is employing industry-leading privacy and security protections to ensure the Hub is a tool we can all trust.

[The Baltimore Youth Data Hub](#) will help city agencies and partners [better understand and serve](#) Baltimore's youth and will protect people's privacy in two ways:

1. Data security measures that prevent unauthorized access to data.
2. Data privacy policies and governance that control authorized access.

In short, the Hub's is designed to keep the wrong people out and to transparently govern how the approved people access and use data.

[Data Security: The Hub's technological safeguards keep systems secure.](#)

- All data used in the Baltimore Youth Data Hub will be [deidentified](#), meaning that the data won't include names or any personal information that could identify an individual person.
- The Data Hub's technological systems will be managed by a trusted **service provider** with the expertise and experience to implement data security measures, protect against ransomware attacks, and keep up with developments in the system management and security fields.
- The Hub will employ [multifactor authentication](#), which requires users to verify their identity with multiple methods, typically [a combination](#) of a known element (like a password), possession of a controlled item (like an authorized computer), and a personal marker (like a fingerprint).
- Data in the Hub will be **encrypted in movement and at rest**, meaning that any data brought together through the Hub will be purposefully altered and disguised so that it could not be understood or interpreted even if someone were to access it.
- The Hub is being built as a **federated model**, meaning that no data permanently lives within the Hub. All data is stored and managed by the same city agencies who have the data now; data is only connected through the Hub when an authorized user is conducting approved research.

[Data Privacy: The Hub's policies govern access and ensure data use is ethical and fair.](#)

- The Hub is being constructed with [principles of privacy by design](#). This means that privacy protections and data ethics aren't an afterthought or an add-on, but are central to how the entire Data Hub is being designed and implemented.
- Access to and use of the Baltimore Youth Data Hub will be controlled by a **transparent, inclusive governance committee**. This governance body will include representatives from all of the city agencies that are contributing data to the Hub. Only projects approved by this committee can be done.
- Access to the Data Hub will be [role-based](#), meaning that only people whose need access to specific data to do their jobs will have access. Access is based on people's roles, not on favors or informal arrangements.

Many [other cities and states](#) have successfully implemented this type of data hub and The Baltimore Youth Data Hub will build on the field's best practices. The Baltimore Youth Data Hub is being designed to minimize risks to privacy and security as well as the risk of inaction when our youth need us to act.



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