

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
Support with Amendments
House Bill 384 –
Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodilator Availability and Use – Policy**

February 10, 2022

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports with amendments House Bill 384 and believes this legislation is designed to save lives of students that may suffer an unexpected asthma attack.

The school board estimates that the proposed legislation would cost approximately \$40,000 annually to ensure two bronchodilators per school are present, with the understanding that these devices do expire and would need to be replaced. Students with identified risk already have a prescription and orders for administration exist in health suites.

The legislation further calls for training on recognizing signs of distress. The Baltimore City Health Department staff health suites in Baltimore City schools i.e. they are not employees of the school system, therefore the school board cannot direct them to provide training. While the board believes this can become part of ongoing professional development, the actual training should be conducted by qualified health professionals. **Therefore, we ask for language that would require local health departments to provide professional development on recognizing distress to local schools in school systems that have a contractual arrangement to provide health services.**

Additionally, rescue inhalers should only have school nurses administer the inhaler because they have already have the training necessary to recognize distress. If a school does not have a designated health professional, emergency person can be identified to administer to already identified with bronchial issues. **We also request an amendment that the person to administer must be a person that is in the school every day, not someone that is part time or in only 7 days a school year.** For non medical personnel, familiarity with a student in key in also understanding medical issues.

The Board also wants the committee to understand that the reason a skilled nurse or emergency personnel are the best to administer is because with COVID, there are similar breathing issues and a nurse or emergency personnel would understand the difference, but a person without medical training may not.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports with amendments, House Bill 384 and urges a favorable report.

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