

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Jhnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
House Bill 961  
Public Schools – School Psychologist Recruitment Program**

**March 1, 2023**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners is always supportive of recruiting and retaining school personnel, particularly school psychologists at such a difficult time in this country. This bill establishes a School Psychologist Recruitment Program in the Maryland State Department of Education, an area that needs focus for the future mental health of our student body.

School psychologist partner with school based staff and students to create a safe and supportive learning environment. Maryland has a shortage of qualified school psychologists and this legislation will help with the recruitment and retention of school psychologists in Maryland schools. It has become increasingly difficult to attract and retain certain staff at the school level and administrative level in school systems across the country, including Baltimore City. From teachers, to paraprofessionals to school psychologist, attracting and retaining personnel is critical as school systems work to offset learning loss and provide academic enrichment and social and emotional resources to students and staff.

For the forgoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports House Bill 961 and urges a favorable report.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
[dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-250-0190

Melissa Broome  
Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs  
[mcbroome@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:mcbroome@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-525-3038