

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Catherine E. Pugh**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Cheryl A. Casciani**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board of  
School Commissioners

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

October 23, 2018

Dear Banneker Blake Academy for Arts and Sciences Community,

Baltimore City Public Schools is committed to providing a wide range of high-quality school options for all students. The district's charter, transformation, and other schools with external operators contribute significantly to that commitment. These schools expand the options available to students and families, and help ensure our students have access to an education that meets their needs and supports their growth.

City Schools is equally committed to ensuring that all of its schools support students' academic success. The district does this, in part, by reviewing schools regularly in a range of areas. In the case of schools with external operators, the review process (called *renewal*) considers academic performance and school climate, as well as financial management and governance. The renewal process occurs every three or five years, depending on each school's contract or charter, and is an assessment of the school's performance over time. This process reflects the district's priorities, as well as best practices from school systems nationwide.

As you recall, on February 13, 2018, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners voted to approve a one-year conditional renewal of the school's charter. This recommendation reflected "developing" and "not effective" ratings the school received in key areas including financial management/governance. The school was required to develop an action plan to address the concerns and to submit it for my approval. Progress toward goals of that plan would then inform a new recommendation to the Board of School Commissioners on whether to renew the school's charter for three years or five years, or not to renew.

Based on evaluation of your school's progress under the approved action plan and a review of updated data, on October 23, I will recommend to the Board that the contract with Baltimore Education Trust for Young Men, Inc. (your school's operator) not be renewed, and that your school close at the end of the current school year.

As members of the Banneker Blake community, your feedback on this recommendation is critical. There will be a meeting at your school where you can get more information and answers to your questions. The Board anticipates voting on this recommendation at a public meeting on November 13, 2018.

For more information concerning the review process, the renewal report for your school, and recommendations for other operator-run schools in the district, please ask at your school office or visit our website at [www.baltimorecityschools.org](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org).

Thank you for supporting our schools and students. We look forward to working in partnership with all our families and school communities to create a district of high-quality school programs that meet the needs of every student in Baltimore.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises  
Chief Executive Officer