

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bernard C. "Jack" Young  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Linda Chinnia  
Chair, Baltimore City Board of  
School Commissioners

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises  
Chief Executive Officer

November 10, 2020

Dear Robert Coleman Elementary School Staff, Students, Families, and Community Members,

City Schools is committed to making sure that every school across the city provides our students with high-quality educational experiences that enables students to thrive, supports their learning and encourages their personal growth. Part of our work in reaching this goal includes an annual review of the district's schools and programs that looks at a broad range of considerations, including academic performance, school climate, school programming, enrollment trends, conditions of school facilities, the range and balance of school options in different parts of the city, and the 21st Century School Buildings Plan.

I recognize that school year 2020-21 is complicated by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the impacts of that pandemic on our communities, and the recognition of the ongoing injustices that impact the communities we serve, our staff and our work. We recognize that changes to school communities can be stressful for school communities. Therefore, this year's recommendations are limited to actions that are part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Buildings Plan or recommendations where postponing potential actions could cause greater harm than having the Board consider and act sooner on the behalf of our students.

**Tonight, as a result of this year's review, I am recommending to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners that they approve the surplus and return of Harriet Tubman Building back to the city of Baltimore in summer 2021.** As you know, Robert Coleman has been located in the Harriet Tubman building as swing space for the past two years while its new building is under construction. After Robert Coleman moves into its renovated 21st Century building for the 2021-22 school year, the Harriet Tubman Building will no longer be needed by the district for educational purposes.

If approved and given the importance of the Harriet Tubman school name and desire to maintain the history of schools, this school name will be part of work staff is doing to continue to honor the history of schools named after important persons, particularly those rooted in the history of our students and Baltimore and/or Maryland, in our portfolio of schools.

As a member of the Robert Coleman community, your feedback on this recommendation is critical. **A virtual meeting will take place for your school community beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 23,** where you can learn more and get answers to your questions. Details on how to join the meeting are at the end of this letter, will be posted on your school page of the City Schools website and sent out by your school leader.

**In addition, the Board is providing two opportunities for the public to give comments on all recommendations in the report of this year's review of schools and programs.** As City Schools continues to fight the spread of COVID-19, all Board meetings will be held remotely in the interim. Please check the Board calendar or BoardDocs on the City Schools website for call-in information to observe the meetings which can be found here: <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/board-meetings>.

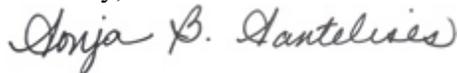
- Public hearing: Wednesday, December 2, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- Special session: Wednesday, December 16, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The opportunity for oral testimony will be closed after completion of the December 16 special session. The Board will also accept written comment or data until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 8, 2021. Written comment must include full identification of the sender and should be directed to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, 200 E. North Ave., Room 406, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, or sent by email to [portfoliorecommendations@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:portfoliorecommendations@bcps.k12.md.us).

In support of the recommendation, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (“Board”) has received a report titled Annual Review of Schools: Review and Recommendations, 2020-21 (“Report”). The Report outlines recommendations and the factors the Board must consider in this process. The Report is available on the district’s website ([www.baltimorecityschools.org](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org)) and upon request for review at your school. **The Board will vote on this recommendation at a meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2021.**

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

Sincerely,



Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises  
Chief Executive Officer

**Link for the Community Meeting:**

[Click here to join the meeting on Nov 23 at 5:30 pm](#)

**Or call in (audio only)** +1 443-961-1488, 193814116# United States, Baltimore  
Phone Conference ID: 193 814 116#

For best experience, join using the link rather than calling in if you are able, so you can see the presentation. You must identify yourself to join and participate in the meeting.