

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Johnette A. Richardson
Chair, Baltimore City Board
of School Commissioners

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

February 24, 2022

Dear Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School Community,

As shared last month, at its meeting on January 25th, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners voted to close Steuart Hill Academic Academy at the end of next school year in June 2023, rezone all students to Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School, expand the Franklin Square zone to include the Steuart Hill zone, create a 35% Geographic Attendance Area for Frederick Elementary School for the Steuart Hill zone, and to return the school building (“surplus”) to the City of Baltimore in summer 2023.

The purpose of this letter is to make you aware that today, the Board issued a written report that documents this decision. The report can be found on the City Schools website: <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/annual-review> and is available at your school for viewing. In making its determination, the Board considered the CEO’s rationale, testimony provided at public hearings and submitted in writing, contents of the official record, and the factors required by COMAR and listed in Board policy FCA Closing of Schools (student enrollment trends, age or condition of school buildings, transportation, educational programs, racial composition of student body, financial considerations, student relocation, impact on community and schools which students would relocate).

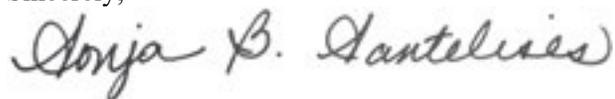
As described in the notice on the back of this letter (which also appeared this morning in the Baltimore Sun and Daily Record newspapers), members of the public can appeal the Board’s decision in writing to the Maryland State Board of Education within 30 days of today’s date.

The Board approved these recommendations because Steuart Hill has been an extremely small school with low enrollment for several years. Because schools are funded on a per-student basis, school size impacts our ability to provide students with staffing and strong, well-rounded academic programming. Additionally, the Steuart Hill facility has major challenges. The building suffers from foundation ground water issues and periodically water floods into the school spaces. The facility also needs major systems updates, including new windows and a new roof. Bringing the school communities of Steuart Hill and Franklin Square together and providing increased access to Frederick will provide students and families with access to schools in buildings better able to support learning and with increased capacity to offer staffing and rich, robust, and varied educational programming.

In the coming months, staff will work with you on creating a shared identity in preparation for combining the school communities and making the transition as smooth as possible. Please let Principal Roberts know if you would like to be part of the transition committee. Please watch for more information about the schedule of events. For more information on this you can reach out to the Angela Alvarez (adalvarez@bcps.k12.md.us) or Lindsey Anderson (leanderson@bcps.k12.md.us) in the Office of New Initiatives or reach them by phone at 410-396-8550.

Thank you for supporting our schools and students. We look forward to working in partnership with students, families, and your school community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer, Baltimore City Public Schools
Secretary, Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners

NOTICE OF THE BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS' DECISIONS REGARDING SCHOOL CLOSURES, SCHOOL RELOCATIONS, AND BUILDING SURPLUS

At a public meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners ("Board") voted on recommendations regarding school closures and disposition of unused school buildings ("surplusing"), in Baltimore City Public Schools. Written reports of the Board's decisions have been compiled in the School Closures and Building Surpluses Addendum Report, available at the Baltimore City Public Schools website, www.baltimorecityschools.org, or by contacting City Schools at 410-396-8550. Copies of written reports are also available for inspection at each of the closing schools named below. The Board's decisions are summarized as follows.

Closure of traditional schools and building surpluses

Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School: The Board voted to close Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School effective June 2023 and surplus its building to the city of Baltimore in summer 2023. Students will be rezoned to either Dorothy I. Height Elementary School, Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School, or Furman Templeton Preparatory Academy. The zones for these schools will be expanded and adjusted to include divided portions of the Eutaw-Marshburn zone.

Steuart Hill Academic Academy: The Board voted to close Steuart Hill Academic Academy effective June 2023 and surplus its building to the city of Baltimore in summer 2023. Students will be rezoned to Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School. The Franklin Square zone will expand to include the Steuart Hill zone, and a 35% Geographic Attendance Area for Frederick Elementary School will be created for the Steuart Hill zone.

Closure of a traditional school and retention of building

New Era Academy: The Board voted to close New Era Academy effective June 2023 and retain the Southside building where the New Era program is housed. Preference for students from the Cherry Hill, Maree G. Faring, Curtis Bay, Bay Brook, Westport, and Lakeland zones will be created at Benjamin Franklin High School at Masonville Cove and Digital Harbor High School starting for students applying for entry for the 2023-24 school year. The PTECH program and Seagoing pathway from New Era Academy will be relocated to Digital Harbor High School, and the AJROTC program from New Era Academy will be relocated to Benjamin Franklin High School for the 2023-24 school year.

RIGHT TO APPEAL: An appeal to the Maryland State Board of Education may be submitted in writing within thirty (30) days after February 24, 2022, the date of issue of the Board's written decision. The appeal should be sent to Office of the Attorney General, Maryland State Department of Education, Attn: Jackie La Fiandra/State Board of Appeals, 200 St. Paul Place, 19th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202