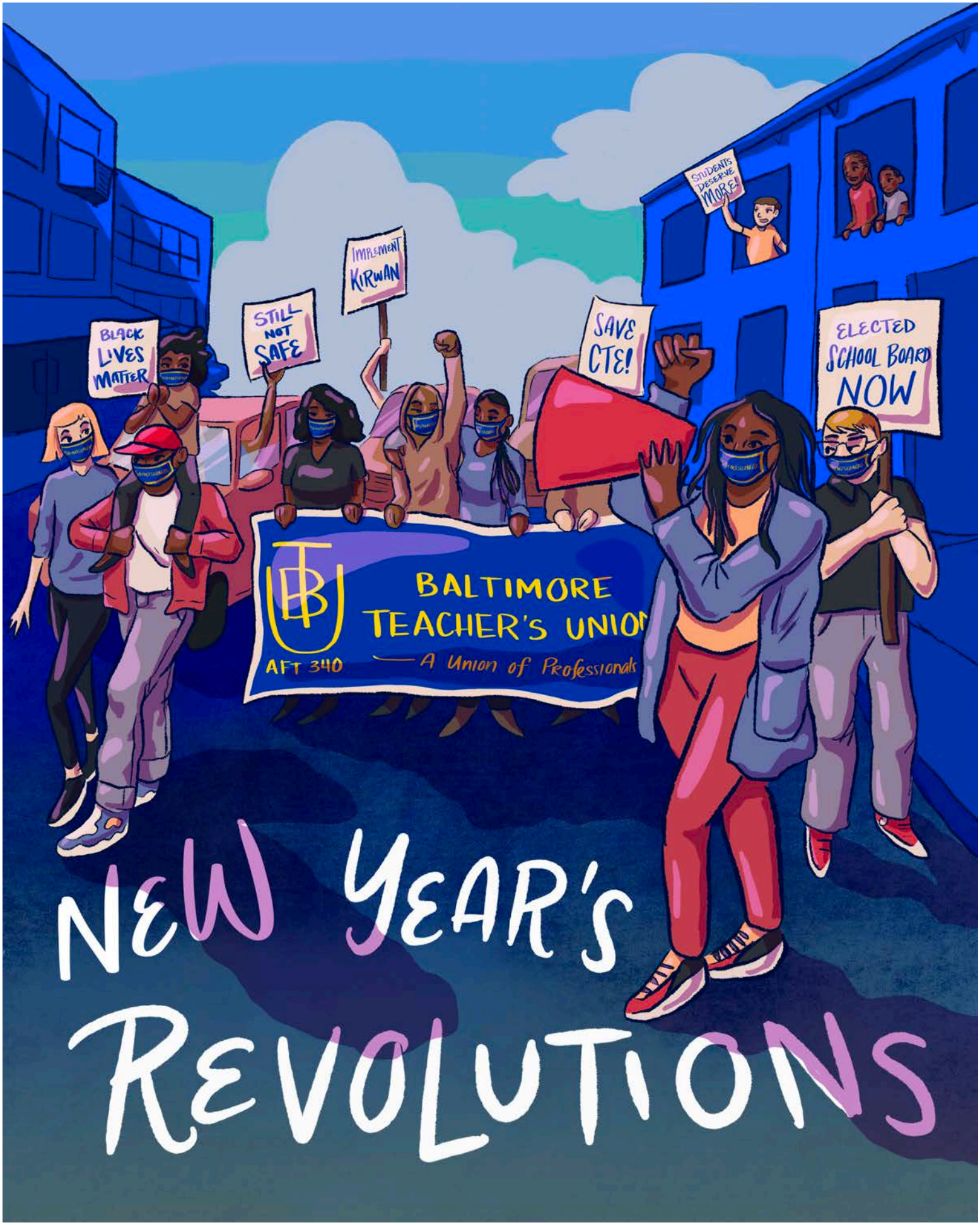

Artwork by BTU member Meghann Harris

A Message From President Brown

Dear Members,

For me, the past three months have been full of intense conversations with members, families, students, and elected officials. In my visits to school buildings and worksites across the district, I have had valuable in-person conversations with so many members. Being in school buildings is scary right now, and members have shared with me that they are afraid. Many of our members who are reporting to work in school buildings don't want to be in the position they are in. However, the fear that people are experiencing is making them more inclined to share stories. I think it's important for all of us to share our experiences about being in school buildings, because our stories have power.

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I have spoken to secretaries who don't feel safe giving temperature checks, and don't feel protected behind the flimsy desk shields that are supposed to be keeping them safe. Members also expressed concerns about being in the building without having the opportunity to be fully vaccinated (hopefully by the time you are reading this, members who want to be vaccinated have received their full vaccination). At one building I visited, a staff member who is also a parent of BCPSS students said that they think this entire school year needs to be chalked up, and that we should begin planning for next year and take the time to do it right. Their co-workers agreed. One educator who spoke up and shared their perspective made it safe for other staff members in the conversation to do the same.

While visiting Central Office I spoke with school police officers who expressed concerns about cleanliness and whether there was enough custodial staff and whether they have enough of the correct supplies to truly disinfect spaces the way they should be disinfected. A member of the custodial staff shared his concerns about the ventilation in his building and taught us how to use toilet paper to see if the ventilation system in a room was moving any air.

All of these stories have had a major impact on me. It gave me and continues to give me more strength to keep on fighting. I'm fighting so that the members who have to be in buildings in unsafe conditions can get what they need to feel safe. I'm fighting to keep even more people from having to go into unsafe conditions in the first place.

The opportunity to have in-person conversations with people is priceless, and although they are more difficult in a pandemic, in-person conversations build trust. When we trust each other and we have these relationships and connections based on in-person experiences, we can support each other and work together to fight for safety, and reasonable workloads, and for the resources we and our students need.

In solidarity,
President Diamonté Brown

It's Time for an Elected School Board

By Corey Gaber

Millions of Marylanders voted in this past election, breaking same day registration records to select their representatives in local, state, and federal government. In Baltimore City, voters also approved checks on our strong mayor system by increasing the budgetary powers of the City Council. Yet Baltimore City residents did not cast a ballot for school board members, those with the power to vote on educational policies - from grading to zoning to curriculum to school closures to the operating budget - that affect nearly 80,000 children and their families. School Board Commissioners also hire and evaluate the CEO, and negotiate contracts with BTU and other unions who work for the school system.

Every other Maryland jurisdiction has an elected school board: 19 are fully elected and 4 are an appointed/elected hybrid. Why not Baltimore City? Our student outcomes lag behind every other jurisdiction despite incremental progress under current leadership, and we cannot wait any longer for bold and decisive action. Rather than vote, Baltimore residents must rely on third parties to choose our board members via a largely closed, bureaucratic process. How many readers realize the process to recruit the next two appointed Baltimore City School Board members ended last year on November 25? Delegate Melissa Wells (D45) and Senator Charles Sydnor (D44b), recently submitted HB 1026 and SB 0906 to remedy this unjust and undemocratic situation.

The clear answer is a publicly funded hybrid school board that represents the people it serves and ensures necessary areas of expertise are covered. This includes a student member with full voting rights, as is the case in Montgomery County, MD. We believe innovative ideas and honest perspectives come directly from young people attending our schools. Daily, they experience the opportunities and challenges of public education. Student voice should be counted in all matters, not just the few currently allowed by statute.

While there is a plan to elect two members in November 2022, these members will be a limited democratic supplement to the current board, far less than what is guaranteed to all other families and communities throughout Maryland. We are asking for what other jurisdictions already have: a majority elected school board. Baltimore is no less deserving than other jurisdictions to exercise democracy and self-governance.

Not only is the school board undemocratic, but Baltimore City is one of just two jurisdictions, in one of the wealthiest states in the nation, where board members are not compensated. Serving on the school board is the equivalent of taking on an unpaid, part-time job. Regular meetings, often during the work day, are challenging for many workers and/or those with small children, limiting the pool of candidates to people with flexible schedules and more resources.

People should be fairly compensated for their time and the opportunity to serve should be accessible to all people, especially people with students in City Schools. By contrast, other large districts in Maryland and across the country pay their school board members up to $25,000 a year and student members receive substantial scholarships.

Another challenge the current wholly appointed Board presents is that the only regular interaction with the community is two public board meetings a month. In those meetings a maximum of ten people are heard for three minutes each. That's right - formal public engagement is limited to a single hour a month during which Board members do not ask questions or engage with their stakeholders.

Each year that passes with a Board that only engages families and communities on their terms, and largely through surface level communication, is a missed opportunity to build on the strengths we offer. They miss the chance to hear our truths and expertise, having experienced the effects of their policies first-hand. We know that decisions made today will impact thousands of children for years to come.

Now more than ever, with our children at home--many who have no access to the technology and resources they need in the face of COVID-19--we are witnesses to how schools operate. We have thoughts and ideas, and a single hour of public testimony is not enough for us to have our voices heard. This is our City, these are our schools, and this should be our Board. We demand our voices be heard now! Only a majority elected school board ensures they will be, and we call on our Mayor, City Council and our delegation to the General Assembly to stand with us in support of this common sense reform. To get involved, email cgaber@baltu.org

Meeting With The Mayor

By Patrice Pilgrim – Chair of the Baltimore Community COVID-19 Taskforce

I have always believed that it is the job of everyday citizens to hold their leadership accountable; that it is our job as a community to make them hear and act on our various concerns. That thought was at the forefront of my mind when the COVID-19 Taskforce last met with Mayor Brandon Scott. During the last meeting between the Taskforce and Mayor Scott, he expressed interest in getting more information on a few issues.

Mayor Scott wanted to know what accommodations--if any--were being given to staff as well as students. He also expressed the desire to get specific information on how the pods were working and how their function differed from that of a hybrid learning situation. He also wanted to hear the most current data that we had on the status of ventilation and which schools have an adequate ventilation set-up, compared to others that might not.

Mayor Scott wanted some serious information from us, but what we wanted from him was his public endorsement of our demand that not one more teacher, staff member or student be sent back into school buildings until these buildings were safe--as defined by the metrics of the Maryland Department of Health and the CDC. We shared with him that based on the data from the relevant authorities, the district's plan for reopening schools was reckless and poorly organized. We explained that this plan provided little to no clarity but that instead, the plan created a host of other questions that the district was either unable or unwilling to answer.

Staff members were scared and angry - a concerning mix of emotions to be sure. They were afraid that they would be forced into an unsafe environment--some of them were already in such a situation--and that they would risk possibly taking the virus home to their family members. They were angry that, yet again, the District was showing a total disregard for the input of teachers--the same teachers that they claimed to be grateful for. No matter what actions were taken, the District seemed hell-bent on moving forward with this reopening plan that did not clearly define what steps would be taken and what resources had been allocated to support its implementation.

In short, there were too many questions and too few answers to them. The Taskforce and other stakeholders kept brainstorming ways that we could highlight our plight and gain additional public support. Then, word came down from the District that expansion of in-person learning for an increased segment of the school population had been pushed back another two weeks. While this was seen as a victory by the Taskforce as well as the BTU and other stakeholders, the war still remains.

The date when even more teachers and staff will be forced back into buildings is fast approaching and the fear and uncertainty of the past weeks is surging forward again. What can members do? What can the other concerned stakeholders do in the face of such a scary prospect of going back into buildings that we know are not safe? The answer, though not simple, is still actionable. There needs to be a buy-in to the concept of holding the District accountable. How we do that is going to be up to all of us. The ventilation dashboard that the district put up, at the time I am writing this, is currently down. We need to keep up the pressure on them to have it back up and reporting accurate information. That means that the community, in addition to us, the staff of City Schools, needs to reach out to the Board of Commissioners and Dr. Santelises demanding that they fix and update the dashboard so that we can track the status of a ventilation upgrades.

It also means that we as members of the BTU, the Taskforce and the community, need to ensure that not only are we aware of what the metrics of the Maryland Department of Health and the CDC are, but that we understand what the District's Health and Safety Guidelines are supposed to look like when properly executed. We need to ensure that the District keeps its word and executes every safety precaution that they have pledged to. Additionally, we need to support each other through all of this. Just because some of us can shout does not mean that we should discount those who can only whisper. If enough people whisper, their voices can be heard. If enough of us who can shout do just that, pretty soon what we are shouting about will be all that can be heard. Let's continue to do what we can with the resources that we have and support each other.

Know Your Contract: The Sick Bank Articles VIII.G (PSRP) and 15.4 (Teacher)

By Cynthia Sjoquist, BTU Field Rep, inspired by Tishea Lester

The Sick Bank is designed to provide temporary assistance to members in the event of unexpected illness. In the event of YOUR OWN long-term illness, you may apply to the Sick Bank. Each Sick Bank Application is a request for 10 days of sick leave time. You may get paid for up to 30 leave days from the Sick Bank during your absence. All bargaining unit members are eligible to enroll in the Sick Bank.

The Sick Bank, Step-By-Step:

1. Enroll in the Sick Bank at the beginning of the school year (or within 30 days of your date of hire). You MUST re-enroll in the Sick Bank every year. By enrolling, you consent to donate one sick day to the Sick Bank.
2. Apply for FMLA (to protect your job) and use your own earned sick leave to cover your pay.
3. Once your own accrued sick leave is exhausted, contact Marisha Ingram, mingram@baltu.org, for a Sick Bank application. You must use the approved form, submit a pay stub, and provide any medical documentation. Return.
4. The Sick Bank Committee will meet and approve or deny pending applications. The Sick Bank Committee meets every other Tuesday. Applications must be in by Monday to be considered.
5. If approved, you will be unpaid for 5 days, then the Sick Bank will kick in.
6. If your leave is longer than 10 days, you will submit a second application, but there will be no gap in pay.
7. Get well! Rest easy, knowing your pay and benefits are unscathed!

FAQs:

1. Why did I only get half pay?
In order to access the Sick Bank, you must go 5 days without pay. This is for your first application only. Any additional leave requests will not require the 5 days of non-payment.
2. Why do I have to reapply every ten days?
The Sick Bank Committee determines the length of award.
3. Why did the Sick Bank Committee deny my application?
Most denials are because the member is asking to apply to the Sick Bank for the care of a family member. It is important to note that the Sick Bank can only be accessed for YOUR OWN illness. Another reason may be an incomplete application or lack of sufficient medical documentation. If this is the case, the Sick Bank Committee will either request more information or ask for a Medical Release Authorization to contact your doctors.
4. I thought I enrolled, but it didn't go through! What can I do?
You can appeal to the Sick Bank for membership; however, you must provide documentation of your attempt to enroll or a valid reason you were unable to.
5. Can I use the Sick Bank for Intermittent Leave?
No. The Sick Bank can only be used for continuous absence.

PSRP Update

Congratulations to Morgan Showalter for his hard work, dedication and contributions to the Kirwan Commission's recommendations. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is a huge win for the Maryland school system. However, we must continue to push for full inclusion of PSRPs. PSRPs are the foundation of helping and supporting instruction that goes on inside and outside of school buildings. Even though there was much positive discussion among the commissioners, many public comments, support from our union partners, and tons of letters and emails, the Kirwan Commissioners were not able to come up with a consensus about also raising PSRP pay at the same time as the teachers.

Our school system will succeed and advance if all teachers and PSRPs get better resources, training, and increased salaries. Our students deserve the best from all of us.

- Arshay Bacon, PSRP Elementary Vice President

Letter of Compassion

So much has changed since the Covid pandemic hit the world. Individuals have been driven by frustration, fear and anxiety. The PSRP Executive Board would like to let every BTU member know we care about you. We appreciate the courage of PSRPs, teachers, and school staff members that have been in the building since September working hard to stay safe educating our students. The PSRP Executive Board would like to extend support to anyone who needs it. Thank you for your dedication and service.

-Shawn Mckay, PSRP Vice-Chair
mckayshelly52764@gmail.com

- The PSRP Committee meets monthly on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. Email psrpcommittee@baltu.org for more information.
- The Clerical Committee meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:15 p.m. Email clericalcommittee@baltu.org
- The PSRP Negotiation Committee meets monthly on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Email negotiationcommittee@baltu.org
- All Committees meet virtually. For links to the committee meetings, please email the committee's email address.

Lack of Transparency in BCPSS is a Clear and Present Danger

By Michael Donaldson

The lack of transparency from Baltimore City School leadership is extremely troublesome for teachers, staff, parents, students, and various other community stakeholders. Not only does this lack of transparency cause a great deal of unwarranted anxiety, it can also be dangerous--even deadly.

The greatest concern around this lack of transparency is directly associated with the reopening of schools amidst a global pandemic. As of this writing, there has been a well-documented spike in positive coronavirus cases as well as reported deaths. As many individuals in the Baltimore Teachers Union have stated, the city created a reopening plan that was submitted to, and accepted by, the Maryland State Department of Education early in the school year. This plan provided a list of specific metrics that indicated that reopening would only take place after a substantial decrease in transmission and danger. This plan is no longer being used as the blueprint.

Prior to the submission of this original plan, the school system provided parents in the district with a survey. This survey asked parents for feedback, offering the appearance that district leadership was concerned about parent input. It needs to be pointed out that this survey was sent to parents at the close of summer when cases seemed to have plateaued and the country looked ready to reopen. Since that time, numbers have drastically risen; yet those early survey responses are being used by district leadership as evidence for parents calling for the reopening of schools. In fact, the most recent parent interest survey was not sent to parents until district leadership made the formal announcement that all elementary and high schools would provide live instruction.

Besides the troubling manner in which the reopening plan is being rolled out, school leadership has also been reckless in how it has used statistics to hide the truth. For several weeks, district leadership has touted that the number of COVID-19 transmission cases within schools is non-existent. Adminstrators from North Avenue have stated repeatedly that children are not carriers of the virus and that numbers of infected staff are minimal. These allegations are false and are being used to force a narrative that the media and elected officials can freely cite. The truth is that the number of staff who have tested positive for the coronavirus is much larger than what is being reported. Additionally, there are many recent studies that suggest children can have the virus but remain asymptomatic. This puts all adults – including elderly relatives of students – at unnecessary risk.

BTU members have also expressed concerns about the lack of a transparent explanation for the urgent push for children to return to school now. Other districts in the state acknowledge how close teachers are to receiving two vaccinations. The partnership between the school system and Johns Hopkins is an indicator of the importance of said vaccination. Instead of delaying the reopening of schools, however, District leadership contends that a decrease in attendance and the increase in the number of failing students from the first quarter is the main reason for the frantic push for reopening. The first quarter ended in October and therefore, to say that schools need to open based on the performance of students from the first quarter now in February appears unlikely.

Finally, the school system has blatantly been deceptive in its dissemination of information. School staff were told on January 14th that the reopening of impacted grades would occur in the middle of February. This information had been rumored for weeks, but district leadership denied that this was the case. It is also being told to the media and community members that schools are ready for the return of students. This could not be further from the truth. Most schools set to reopen do not have the resources in place to make them safe, including air purifiers and personnel needed for adequate sanitizing.

Although this is not an exhaustive list, it is obvious that one thing Baltimore City Public Schools has done poorly at during this pandemic (as well as at many other points over the years) is provide transparency. Misinformation is being presented as fact and legitimate information is being trickled down to teachers and staff only when it is convenient for leadership to do so. This is an unjustifiable practice to a staff that is willing to do just about anything for the betterment of children--except, that is, to die doing so.

The CTE Conundrum in BCPSS

By Harry F Preston V, BTU Vice President of Vocational Education (Teacher Chapter)

Just a few short years ago there was a major national push to expand Career Technology Education (CTE) in primary and secondary schools. Probably the only thing President Obama and President Trump did with equal enthusiasm is insist on businesses and school districts supporting strong CTE programing in schools. While suffering the dramatic cuts of a global pandemic, companies around the world continue to express the need for skilled workers. It is in this time that our school district should be focusing on the expansion of our CTE programming.

However, late in 2020 North Avenue's Office of College and Career Readiness, formerly the Office of Career Technology Education, announced massive, sweeping changes to CTE programs across Baltimore City Schools. In response, as BTU's Vice President of Vocational Education, I hosted a series of CTE Town Halls where CTE teachers engaged directly with the new Director of Career Readiness, Kumasi Vines, and his newly reorganized team of specialists. They promised to hear teachers out and that they would reflect on their recommendations to the board. As expected, his office moved forward with their ill-informed plans to cut and reduce programming.

Over and over again they continued to cite inaccurate and antiquated data from a report that utilized wage and placement data from 2016. In full disclosure, I would say that their efforts to reduce inefficiencies in the system are not only admirable but long overdue. However, their approach is a sledge hammer in a situation that requires precision.

We cannot argue with the fact that there are some programs that need to be updated and upgraded, but wiping the slate clean is beyond excessive. The impacts to schools are real, the impact to communities are major, but the impact to students will be devastating. The full proposed list of closures and program movements can be found here.

The full plan is something we can change but it requires effort. We cannot allow the discussion to become "They are going to do what they want anyway." We have the ability to make meaningful input and change the outcomes. Bringing all of the stakeholders to the table is a major part of the first step. On Thursday, February 11th, the BTU Executive Board voted to establish a committee for CTE Stakeholders. This committee will organize around pushing the district to make the right moves to grow our programs instead of cutting them. The committee will train and support teachers and community members to provide significant push back on the District's CTE plan.

If you want to learn how to engage or lead the charge at your school or in your community, please click here and sign up to be a part of the new committee. Stay tuned for updates!

Black Lives Matter Course Seeks to Remedy Educational Injustice

By Delana Penn

As stated in the recently ratified resolution on Black Lives Matter by the Baltimore Teachers Union Executive Board, the BLM movement advocates against educational injustice as a form of institutional racism. It is far too often that our schools have been and continue to be places where our Black students experience that their lives do not matter through curriculum. As standardized curriculum fails to include their lived experiences, power systems simply ignore their families' voices, and the school choice process creates an unfair competition for a quality education, instead of providing it to every student as a basic right.

To address this educational injustice, BTU members helped create a new course for educators with the overarching goal of designing research-based Black Lives Matter (BLM) lesson plans and curriculum which focused on past and present racial issues within Baltimore City. The lesson plans were then shared by the educators during the Black Lives Matter Week of Action February 1-5, 2021. Many Baltimore City teachers presented their lessons school-wide and to their respective students with the intent to showcase the importance of better understanding the Black Lives Matter movement.

As educators, we discovered a perception that race is what other people have, and racism is what other people are responsible for. Therefore, the lessons illustrated how one's life is shaped within the confines of neighborhoods, schools and communities within Baltimore City. The course demonstrated how we live in a racialized society where privilege is essentially an exemption from the weighty cerebral burdens that afflict Black people every day. If you are white, you do not have to deal with the impact of negative assumptions based on the color of your skin. However, if you are Black, you deal with it every day. As someone has put it: white privilege doesn't mean your life isn't hard. It just means the color of your skin isn't one of the things that makes it harder.

For curriculum resources and more from the Black Lives Matter Week of Action, visit http://www.tdpbaltimore.org/blm2021.

Teacher Spotlight: Zachary Taylor

Zach Taylor is a teacher who is currently on external assignment for BTU. Prior to this new role, he has taught social studies, English Language Arts and ESOL, all at the middle school level. Zach has worked at Calverton, Civitas, and most recently, Commodore John Rodgers, where he taught from 2012 to 2019.

What do you miss most about teaching? What do you miss LEAST about it?

Unsurprisingly, no longer working with students on a daily basis has been the biggest drawback of working at the BTU full time. I do not miss the endless grading, paperwork, or proctoring standardized tests.

Why did you decide to run for leadership in the union?

As part of a group of Building Reps and community activists, I saw the power and potential of active union engagement. Whether fighting for fair treatment from school administrators, battling North Ave for the structures and resources needed to do our jobs well, or pressing our local and state government for greater funds, I participated in a number of coalitions that successfully made progress on all fronts. With a deep-seated belief that the membership of the BTU is the union, I also saw that exercising power doesn't occur spontaneously; it needs to be cultivated, leaders in every school need to be supported, and stronger ties need to be made with the communities surrounding our schools. Combining this with ideals of social and racial justice, transparency, and accountability, I ran for union leadership to further build union power and defend public education in Baltimore City at a time when it's been under a sustained attack by a national reform movement that has targeted educators, undermined school communities, and deprived students of what they deserve.

What does your average day look like?

Days vary quite a bit, but most contain at least a few hours of emails and phone calls with members, and several meetings with BTU staff, North Ave, and BTU members - either through various committees or in preparation for negotiations. A good day allows for research to assist in negotiations, school policies, legislation, or meetings with community groups or public officials. The best part of most days is being able to meet and work with BTU members who work throughout the school system. There is so much talent and dedication to public education within BTU, it's inspiring and motivating to work harder to support everyone's efforts.

Thousands of BTU members rely on you for information that affects their jobs and their lives. Where do YOU get your information from? How do you stay on top of all the latest developments at a chaotic time like this?

Almost without exception, the best place to get information and ideas is from members. The BTU Teacher and PSRP chapters have over 150 job titles, and even when members have the same job title, they often have wildly different experiences in a system like BCPSS's that embraces principal autonomy. Teachers and PSRPs who are confronting the difficulties of working in BCPSS often learn of changes or foresee issues long before they become district wide, so regular, one to one contact with members across the system is crucial to the union running well.

On a more logistical level, we get information from as many sources as possible. We monitor every policy development from BCPSS and the State

Board of Education, as well as following, and often influencing, action in the Maryland General Assembly.

We don't just read the legislative updates from public officials or the email newsletters from our brothers and sisters in other unions, we have regular meetings with elected offices and union leaders across the state and in other cities to learn about new initiatives and share ideas.

Members are often frustrated when the union's hands seem to be tied by state laws or other restrictions that limit what tactics the union can use and what the District is required to negotiate on. What would you say to BTU members who feel disempowered?

The legal playing field is definitely tilted against educators and our unions, but our experiences throughout the pandemic have shown a way forward. Through solidarity and mass participation, we're able to exercise power to secure more protections and resources than would have been otherwise possible. While contracts are fundamental to a union's operations, our power goes beyond written agreements. Through working in coalition with parent organizations and community partners, we're able to change media narratives and exert more pressure on district leaders who previously received deferential treatment. We can overcome disempowering legal structures by continuing to raise our voices, developing our collective leadership, and exercising mass participation.

Even with the deck stacked against us, widescale union participation has brought more safety to every single level of the district's plans. Though we haven't won everything we need, the district's original intent was for tens of thousands of students and staff to return in the late fall, while ventilation, testing, accommodations, and countless other safety measures were either insufficient or altogether absent. Basic safety shouldn't be negotiation or a privilege, but under the current school leadership it is. The safety in our current plan exists because of the safety measures BTU fought for. Mass participation brings progress; when we show up and fight, we can win improvements for all students and staff.

Where do you envision BTU in 5 years?

While this has been an exceptionally difficult year for everyone, I'm excited about the future and continued growth of BTU's power. During the pandemic, members at every school have raised their voices and challenged out-of-touch policies that hurt staff and students. There's no going back. We need to sustain and grow this level of critical engagement in all we do - at the bargaining table, at policy meetings, at school sites, and so on. BCPSS management thrives by isolating schools and staff from one another, but members are not alone. Union participation, leadership skills, connections, and ambitions are multiplying every week and it's invigorating to be part of a movement that raises expectations on BCPSS and the City of Baltimore for what's acceptable.

PSRP Spotlight: Deborah Knowles

Deborah Knowles is an office assistant at Patterson High School who also serves as the BTU Building Representative for Patterson's PSRP members. Ms. Knowles has been working in Baltimore City Public Schools for over 20 years. This includes working as an office assistant at Glenmount Elementary/Middle school as well as working in the IEP department at William S. Baer, a school for children with special needs. She has been in her current position as an office assistant at Patterson High School since August 2009.

What has your experience been like working as an office assistant during the COVID-19 pandemic?

We've been in the building the entire time. The only difference is now we take temperatures and wear masks. Also, there are a lot more attendance corrections because students are not in the building and many of them don't have wi-fi or they do not come to get devices and hotspots. It's harder to find students now but staff members are working together with home visits and phone calls to reach all students.

BTU is calling for secretaries and office assistants to be able to work from home. What are your thoughts on that?

I understand a lot of people need or want to work from home and they should be given that option. Personally, working in the building works better for me because there are records that we need and parents have forms that need to be completed; they need to pick up devices, etc. But everyone who is able to do their job from home should be allowed to do so. We have our own little pod of people that have been working together since August. We don't need a lot of other interaction with students and staff. If the kids come back right now, we're concerned that they're taking multiple MTA buses and being exposed to germs. We don't know who they've been around and we don't want to be exposed to that. Also, the City never gave us the correct kind of plexiglass for our desks. They put it on the wrong part of the desk, not where we interact with anyone who comes in to talk to us.

I've been talking to other secretaries and some of the schools have not been touched. Patterson has been ahead of many schools. We formed committees in June, had workshops, brainstorming sessions, and every Wednesday since August a group of people come in and take out extra desks, they mark the floors six feet apart, the hand sanitizer stations are in place. Our situation is unlike a lot of the schools where absolutely nothing has done, according to the other secretaries I've talked to.

What are some things you would like to see go into the next PSRP contract?

The main thing I would like is for us to be able to work toward real raises, not just cost of living adjustments. Like how the teachers get AUs. We should get something like that. Since most PSRPs work longer than seven hours, how can we get paid for the time we actually work?

You have been a building rep for about 5 years now. Why is it important to you to stay involved in the union?

Because I think all the young people are going to be the answer and learn how to get everything together. The young ones in the union are the ones who are going to get things turned around and changed for the better. I've been very impressed with the work that you all are doing and how much effort and passion and concern you have for the students and the city. And it's not only the young ones, but I am impressed with the new ones coming up.

You've been in the system for over 20 years. What keeps you motivated?

The teachers and the students. I see a lot of promise in the students and the teachers working so hard for these kids. It makes me happy when I go around town delivering hot spots, food, and art supplies to see the students and how happy they are to see us. That's one thing that has changed since COVID.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

The CEO should have done a better program of making sure the teachers and PSRPs had more shots like in the counties. Their districts set up sites and every day a different group of teachers and PSRPs got their shots.

BTU Shoutouts

- Shout-out to **Robyn Richie**! (English teacher at Forest Park High School)
- Shout-out to all of the **ESOL teachers and paras** throughout the district who are going above and beyond! It's a rough year. Know that you are appreciated!!!
- Shout-out to **Deborah Price**, our music teacher, who wears so many different hats at GW. She brings joy and dedication to our school each and every day! We are so lucky to have her! <3
- Shout-out to **Cecil Elementary PSRPs** for hosting schoolwide virtual contests for our students and keeping our students engaged with school spirit!
- Shout-out to **Erika Robinson**, who has the heart, patience, and content expertise every great teacher mentor needs. I would not be the educator I am without her!
- Shout-out to **Kelly Humble** (Patterson High School) for her tireless support of so many teachers and students! She is a scheduling monster and a data queen and can always help you figure things out.
- Shout-out to **Karla Jackson**! (City Springs Elementary/Middle School)
- Shout-out to **Chante Pierce**, Kindergarten teacher at Henderson Hopkins Elementary! It's because of her numerous years of experience, passion to see students thrive, ability to teach EVERY student, reach every parent in and outside the classroom combined with compassion, understanding and skill that I am who I am today!
- Shout-out to **Nicholas McDaniels**! (Mervo)
- Shout out to **Angela Brantley** for her kindness, energy, and spirit! It is motivating to be around her!
- Shout-out to **Victoria Lyons**! (Thomas Jefferson Elementary/Middle School)

City Schools Reopening Plan Receives an "F" From Students

By A'niya Taylor, Joshua Lynn, and Kimberly Vasquez (BCPSS students)

How can school be a safe haven
If it is also a war zone
Principal be general
Classmates be soldiers
Education be America
And we be dying men

Sacrificing peace for pens
Safe space for essays

How can I add integers
When I'm risking subtracting my grandmother from the family equation
Every time I walk into the building

And they don't care
They just want to multiply dollar signs
While dividing our lives

We be dying soldiers
Mistaking good grades for good days

How can we bear honor when we can't keep the armor that saves us from things that harm us

-Excerpt from War on Students by A'niya Taylor

The hardest thing for a student to do is fail. As students, we are groomed into thinking that failure is equivalent to being unsuccessful. During this virtual learning experience, I have failed A LOT. Virtual learning sucks. It's hard to grasp information over a computer screen and sit in front of one for hours at a time. It's hard for me to focus on school when I am tirelessly fighting just to live and maintain my mental health. However, haphazardly moving back to in-person learning does not guarantee success or solve these problems; if anything, it sets us up for more failure and suffering.

While going back into school is optional, there are some students (myself included) who feel compelled to go back because we are failing. This puts students in a position to choose between grades and the health of ourselves, our families, and our teachers.

In reality however, this is a false decision. The problem isn't the virtual learning itself; the virtual learning is just a mere catalyst for discussing the root problems of our school system: The root problem being that BCPSS has a lack of resources and an equity policy that they aren't adhering to in the reopening process. Here are some key issues we need solved if we truly care about an equitable education for students and a safe return:

EQUITABLE REOPENING PLANNING WITH STUDENT VOICE

Youth who work and provide for their families is a major trend during this time of need and stability within Black and Brown households. BCPSS prides themselves on turning the corner when it comes to equity but fails to acknowledge the deep inequities that their proposal perpetuates. Equity has been the buzz word for multiple years when it comes to BCPSS but with this reopening plan we see the very same idea be challenged by its originator. BCPSS must commit to bringing students, parents, and educators to the table and ensuring they have meaningful decision-making power as we build a reopening plan together.

Moving forward, the School Board Student Commissioner must have full voting rights in order to properly have a meaningful voice on the board in situations like these where the student voice is needed more than ever.

SAFE & ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The MTA is a big transmission site for youth in Baltimore city. Considering that about 30,000 students catch public transportation, it is a high risk to allow students inside of a school building with unvaccinated teachers, staff, administrators as well as other students. As we see, about 60% of high school students need at least one transfer of buses in order to arrive at school, which allows for more exposure to the outside world where BCPSS has no control. BCPSS and the Baltimore City government must make a specific and detailed transportation plan that keeps students safe and must provide them with 24/7 CHARM cards now and after the pandemic.

INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL EQUITY

The digital divide has been present long before the pandemic hit. In Maryland, 23% of households have no broadband internet service. African Americans make up nearly 40% of those households. If we do not invest in getting students connected to high-speed internet, we are failing to provide the education that students have a fundamental right to. Many students also lack devices or depend on their phones and cellular data to complete work. This leads to ridiculously high bill payments at the end of every month. Other students have a device, but must share it with their family members.

Going back to school won't solve this problem. Even though my home lacks reliable internet, I shouldn't feel pressured to go to school in order to get this service. Instead of making teachers and students risk their lives, the state of Maryland, local governments and school districts should invest in sustainable at-home WiFi and devices for families.

FULL-TIME NURSES WITH REAL RESOURCES

Even before the pandemic, Baltimore's schools have lacked full-time nurses. In Baltimore City, we only have 44 full-time registered nurses yet we have 169 schools. There are nurses that have to split their time between four different schools. According to Wendy Smith, the head of the school nurses union, "Baltimore City is the only jurisdiction that uses this model to deliver healthcare to students. In Maryland every school district has at least one nurse to a school and some systems have two for larger schools such as high schools."

But in our schools, nurses are only available during certain days and certain hours of the week. Even when nurses are present, they lack the resources to truly care for students. I can't count the number of times my peers or I have received a wet paper towel for our injuries instead of an ice pack. During this crisis, Baltimore school nurses have repeatedly sounded the alarm that they don't have the proper protection to treat students. We must invest in the health and safety of our students in school. This means having a full-time nurse in the building 5 days a week during all school hours. And, they must be given the resources they need to adequately do their job. This is necessary now and after the pandemic.

A BREAK FROM STANDARDIZED TESTING

It is no surprise that Baltimore City students are routinely over-tested. If we return before the end of this school year, we cannot lose valuable learning time by being forced to take endless standardized tests such as the MCAP, HSA, iReady, WIDA, and others. BCPSS must put our learning first and waive State and City standardized tests for the remainder of the 20-21 school year and commit to advocating for reduced state testing and against MCAP being used to calculate our final grades in the future.

For these reasons, and the demands of our teachers (such as vaccines, ventilation upgrades, and others) we ask for students to do virtual learning from home as we have been doing since March. We are left with no other option but to fend for ourselves, our teachers and our families. We believe it is not safe to go back and begin in-person instruction.

If anyone wants to join our movement and support our needs for a safe-reopening, follow the movement on Twitter: @SOMOS_CityKnight, @thatboyjosh20, @poeticnonsense2, @theyouthbmore.

The Problems in the Baltimore City Public School System

By Dr. Amna Afreen

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela

As adults we must accept that life is an ongoing challenge to act in accordance with our shared values of human dignity. If only there were a formula for translating high ideals into action, for implementing good governance--systems whose goal is to provide for all people and whose success is measured on the well-being of the weakest among us, rather than on the MOST powerful--on a grand scale, once and for all! But history tells us that the weak will always be vulnerable to the impacts of business and politics conducted for the benefit of the powerful.

Those of us in education have embraced that challenge. Inspired by the great South African leader, Nelson Mandela, who taught that education is the most powerful weapon, we work to empower our youth by giving them the tools to understand the world around them and navigate it with confidence. Hopefully, we teach them that they need not fear a world that seems so unfair and dangerous. We must teach them the skills that will give them confidence to embrace challenges and contribute to solutions.

Although Maryland is one of the wealthiest states in the United States with a poverty rate of 9.0%, Baltimore has a poverty rate of 20.2%. Students are exposed to trauma, violence, drug addiction, lead toxins, homelessness, and poor health/nutrition. Such exposures result in anxiety, ADHD, depression, impulse control problems and aggression.

My students suffer from many of the problems listed above. I teach Social Living to the 2nd graders. When I told them there are 50 states in the US, they didn't believe me. Many said there could not be more than 7-8 States. And when my colleague who also teaches 2nd grade asked students to name some planets, they named Baltimore, New York, and some other states.

The factors our students face often have behavioral outcomes. Emma* used to scream a lot, fight with others, and disrupt everyone. Once she was silent, I asked her how she was doing. She said she didn't want to come to school because her dad was coming home. I asked, "From where?" She replied "From jail". After a while, I told her that I want to talk to her dad about her behavior. She said, "Ms. Afreen, he does not live with us anymore. He was bad with me and mom. So, my mom moved him out."

The school system cannot solve the city's problems, and the curriculum is not addressing their needs.

The unified curriculum called Common Core was designed as an approach that would help to narrow the gap in federal test scores, which is a knowledge gap, between ethnic and racial groups. It requires not only to investigate but also articulate thorough understandings of the texts and the author's purpose. This requires pre-reading and comprehension skills. Some of my students have parents who cannot read English. This curriculum works well for rich school districts, where kids read fluently and parents read them stories. It does not work so well in Baltimore City.

The solution lies in interventions that are lacking. There should be interventionists willing to go to homes, because absentees are prominent in homeless and needy students. "Baltimore has the highest rate of chronic absenteeism in the state: 37 percent of students missed at least 10 percent of school last year."

Summer programs could help low-income families, who usually lose academic learning during summer vacations. "However, summer learning programs are often an afterthought of school districts or not offered at all, especially in restrictive funding environments."

Baltimore summer programs are mostly designed for the high achievers. Thus, the needy students are missing opportunities. The future of Baltimore depends upon the future of its students. Yet, the system is designed to help self-motivated kids from nurturing families. There is not much to offer to the students with the most needs.

When Mandela spoke of education as the most powerful tool for changing the world, he knew we couldn't change it once and for all. But education allows us to understand the problems we face and devise constructive ways to resolve them, working together, in our communities.

Story continued on p. 21

How to Run an Effective Union Chapter Committee

By Ryan Fan

A Union Chapter Committee (UCC) is an essential part of many Baltimore City schools that advocates for the interests of teachers and PSRPs. It looks different for every school, but at its core, a UCC is usually a group of 5-10 BTU members who meet regularly with the principal to address the concerns of the staff. This core group should ideally represent the diversity of the school's staff in as many ways as possible. Since UCCs exist to serve the interests of members, any member of the BTU can add something to the agenda for UCCs to advocate for.

The Union Chapter Committee also exists to ensure all members of the BTU have a voice. Membership meetings happen where BTU members can participate and discuss member concerns. In larger schools, a UCC might also have numerous subcommittees that focus on specific issues and campaigns. Structure and consistent meeting times that are communicated to all BTU members at the school are essential. During meetings, there can be rotating roles like facilitators, timekeepers, and note-takers. At these membership meetings, Building Representatives and Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) give reports and new business is discussed and voted on by members. The UCC should also have a monthly meeting with the principal and possibly other administrators. Principals are required by the BTU contracts to meet with the UCC on a regular basis.

Each BTU member already has significant responsibilities as a teacher or PSRP, and so the added responsibilities of leading a Union Chapter Committee can seem daunting at first. According to former Patterson High School Building Rep Mike Pesa, building representatives and other UCC leaders must delegate tasks to other members and focus on developing new leaders to lighten the load. A school's UCC must identify tasks and divide them equitably among staff, and not take on more than they can handle.

Melissa McDonald, a teacher at ConneXions School for the Arts, says her school's UCC meets every month with the principal, with the Building Representative and 3-4 members of the staff present. Before the meeting, the UCC anonymously surveys the staff to see what issues they want to be addressed at the meeting, and then they send notes from the meeting to all members. Later, they'll talk about prior resolutions and newer issues at the monthly union meeting.

Of course, many schools do not have Union Chapter Committees, and during virtual learning and a pandemic, it's difficult to start a new one. But an effective UCC that advocates for all member interests is contingent on the participation of all members and leaders within a school, not just one individual. The union has many materials on starting an effective Union Chapter Committee, and questions can be directed to Field Representatives for each school.

Building an effective UCC also takes a lot of time, and with the daily obligations of teachers and PSRPs, Pesa says it's important to start slow and grow sustainably. Social leaders within the school should be tapped for the UCC as long as they are committed to the union and not in league with the administration. Providing food, social activities, and child care can make your meetings more inviting and accessible and encourage more members to participate. (Of course, this is hard to do during a pandemic, but it's something to keep in mind for the future.) The UCC should also maintain a phone tree and an email list with everyone's non-BCPSS address and keep members updated during BTU time at monthly faculty meetings.

The point is that running an effective Union Chapter Committee (UCC) does not happen overnight. Sometimes, if a UCC only has two or three people involved, it needs to start with two or three people, and that's OK. It is also difficult to start in the middle of a pandemic, but an effective UCC is a gradual effort that takes time and commitment and is not an instant success, yet definitely worth it in the end.

Ryan Fan is a 9th Grade Special Education English teacher at REACH. He is currently trying to help start a Union Chapter Committee at his school.

The Blueprint For Maryland's Future

By Morgan Showalter & Fareeha Waheed

On February 12th, the Maryland State Senate overturned Governor Hogan's veto of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future - the Kirwan Commission legislation, making the Blueprint a law. For Baltimore City Public Schools, this will reverse decades of inadequate, regressive, and discriminatory education funding and policy. Overturning the veto allows for some of the most comprehensive, progressive, and socially transformative public education reforms ever attempted in the United States to become law in Maryland. Over the last twenty years, more than 3.2 billion dollars of educational funding never reached Baltimore City Public Schools even though the state constitution and the courts mandated it. The new law will address this problem.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future was written based on many of the recommendations proposed by the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education to make Maryland's school system amongst the best in the world. The commission, chaired by Dr. William "Brit" Kirwan, had 25 people, including our very own Baltimore Teachers Union member and dedicated special educator, Morgan Showalter. The Kirwan Commission was tasked with the ambitious charge to overhaul our state's education policy to place Maryland amongst the top of international high performing school systems while also addressing the deficits in the current funding formula.

For educators in Baltimore, the Blueprint will bring about many changes, some of which have already begun, with others being phased in over the next decade. We have already seen the increase in community schools through concentration of poverty grants, which fund community school site specialists and health services providers to support students' and families' needs when schoolwide poverty levels reach 55 percent. In Baltimore City, this means that almost all high schools are eligible to become community schools. There will be changes in how teachers are trained and credentialed as well as a new career ladder structure. Teacher salaries will now align with other professionals with similar education and responsibilities, with the statewide starting salary becoming $60,000. Recognizing that teachers' schedules are rigid, the Blueprint aims to free up 40 % of teachers' workdays for required breaks, collaborative planning, improving curriculum and instruction, and tutoring. Teachers will also have more significant opportunities to take on leadership roles and will no longer have to leave the classroom to have a broader impact on students. The new career pathway will contain two tracks: an administrative pathway, and a teacher development leadership path that culminates in a dual university and Pre-K-12 teaching position. Most importantly, equitable state funding, more resources for schools with concentrated poverty, and an emphasis on expanded Pre-K and Career and Technology Education (CTE) will accelerate education and life opportunities in Baltimore City.

While we're very excited about the Kirwan implementation, we couldn't secure all of the amendments we'd have liked. The current bill has three growth areas: we need to continue organizing around Paraprofessional and School-Related Personnel (PSRP) pay raises, the Blueprint's National Board Certification (NBC) career ladder, and finally, fair funding.

President Brown drafted an amendment to the Blueprint that recognized PSRPs' essential contributions to schools by mandating a pay raise for them; however, it did not make it into the final version of the law. We will continue fighting for this necessary recognition and deserved compensation for our PSRPs.

Additionally, while the Blueprint elevates the teaching profession through increased teacher salaries, it dangerously centers National Board Certification (NBC) as the sole pathway of advancement to reach the top of the ladder. The Baltimore Teachers Union believes that NBC should be a significant part of the career ladder and financially incentivized; however, requiring people only to use NBC to reach the top tiers could damage the school district's recruitment and retention efforts. BTU drafted an amendment to maintain the career ladder's intended outcomes while allowing for a similarly rigorous alternative to NBC as determined by the Blueprint's Accountability and Implementation Board. Luckily, we have time to develop a solution before the statewide career ladder is implemented in 2023.

Finally, we must keep up the fight for fair funding. The Maryland General Assembly took modest steps to modernize our tax code and generate additional revenue to meet critical needs. Still, the state hasn't yet allocated sufficient income to fund the Blueprint's reforms in their entirety. BTU worked inside the Fair Funding Coalition to ensure that the Blueprint was equitably financed. We must continue to fight to reverse our upside-down tax code, close corporate loopholes, and end ineffective tax breaks for businesses.

All BTU members should remain active because the work is far from done here. BTU leaders and members will provide opportunities for people to stay engaged and help organize around the Blueprint's growth areas. In addition to addressing these, it's imperative that educators also keep a vigilant eye to ensure that the state and city implement the Blueprint as intended in a timely and transparent manner.

We will fight full force for our PSRPs to get the much-needed pay raise that they deserve. We will also work to change NBC from being the sole, inequitable gatekeeper in the new career ladder, while also negotiating to grandfather in our teachers, many of whom have already achieved high placement in our career pathways. Lastly, we will continue fighting for fair funding. That's the work that we're planning to do along with BTU leadership; however, we need as many people as possible to advocate with us to achieve the most substantial results.

Morgan Showalter and Fareeha Waheed are educators, active BTU members, and advocates fighting for more equitable and just practices and policies in their classrooms and across Baltimore City. You can find Morgan nurturing his talents as an artist and Fareeha tending to her indoor apartment garden in their free time.

Pressure for Safety Mounts as Baltimore Reopens More Schools

This article was originally published on aft.org on February 16, 2021. It is being reprinted here with permission.

Thanks to pressure for safety measures from Baltimore parents, teachers and school staff, the city's public school system has agreed to delay its rollout of in-person learning until March.

The step comes after members of the Baltimore Teachers Union held an online membership meeting last month that drew more than 2,000 participants, which surpassed the union's previous record-breaking meeting last fall. The meeting was followed by a 300-vehicle car caravan and the release of a petition signed by about 4,000 family members, school staff and allies aiming to marshal the city's coronavirus mitigation efforts into a safe and well-coordinated plan.

As it now stands, Baltimore public schools are set to reopen on March 1 for kindergarten through second grade, March 15 for grades 3-5 [and grade 9], and April 12 for high school seniors so they can have something of a traditional senior year. Already, there are as many as 1,200 students attending school in person; they are mainly special needs students, immigrants and those without internet access.

"This delayed expansion of in-person learning is a victory that has created space for more safety measures to be put in place," says BTU President Diamonté Brown. "Union members, parents and students—we all want written commitments for stronger protections. We want to be back in schools with our students, but only when we know conditions are safe."

A truly safe plan to expand in-person learning, BTU members and parents say in their petition, would include adherence to minimum public health metrics for at least a week, based on standards set by the state of Maryland and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the completion of ventilation upgrades; vaccination of school staff; and a reliable Covid-19 testing program for staff and students.

On ventilation, three-quarters of the city's public schools still have inadequate air flow. The district launched an online dashboard to track ventilation upgrades but had to pull it back to fix technical issues.

On personal protective equipment, a memorandum of understanding signed by BTU and the city last fall requires basic health and safety precautions, including soap and hand sanitizer, as well as face coverings. The city recently updated its safety protocols for schools, but it remains unclear how well the city is monitoring and enforcing those guidelines. As of yet, there is no collaborative process to monitor compliance and outbreaks, and there is no additional professional development to cover new learning conditions.

Activism brings results

Since the pandemic swept through the eastern seaboard almost a year ago, Baltimore union members, students and families have engaged in many actions to ensure their safety and advance remote learning.

Among the most high-profile of their successes was a campaign by the Baltimore-based Students Organizing a Multicultural Open Society (SOMOS)—an effort strongly backed by BTU—that pressured cable giant Comcast into nearly doubling internet speeds for families using its low-cost Internet Essentials program. The change, urgently needed at a time when children must have adequate broadband for remote learning, will take effect nationwide next month.

Other BTU actions have included standing together with the Maryland State Education Association and the Maryland PTA in obtaining a fully virtual opening last fall; organizing a

phone bank with more than 160 volunteers making the case to board members, city leaders and the public for going virtual until it is safe; supporting a member-driven Covid-19 task force, which created the petition; and convening school secretaries and other frontline support staff to air their concerns about safety.

"Every student deserves the freedom to thrive, including safe and healthy schools and communities that practice trauma-informed care," says Fareeha Waheed, a BTU vice president and one of three BTU members on a new city task force that aims to dramatically reduce trauma across Baltimore.

"This requires not only addressing Covid-19 and the racial inequities it has exposed, but also creating just and equitable conditions across all systems impacting our students and educators."

A push for collaboration

Despite these challenges, BTU activists want to make Baltimore a model partnership, bringing the district, union and city together around the goal of reopening schools with science-backed measures to increase safety and address fears about the pandemic.

In addition to continuing its direct talks with the district, BTU wants Baltimore's new mayor, Brandon Scott, to support the union in coming to an agreement on safeguards in and around buildings. To fight the Covid-19 surge, Scott instituted aggressive interventions immediately upon taking office in December, which likely helped with declining rates of transmission. Now BTU wants the mayor to bring together the school board, the school district CEO, the mayor's office, students and parents, along with the union, to devise a workable plan.

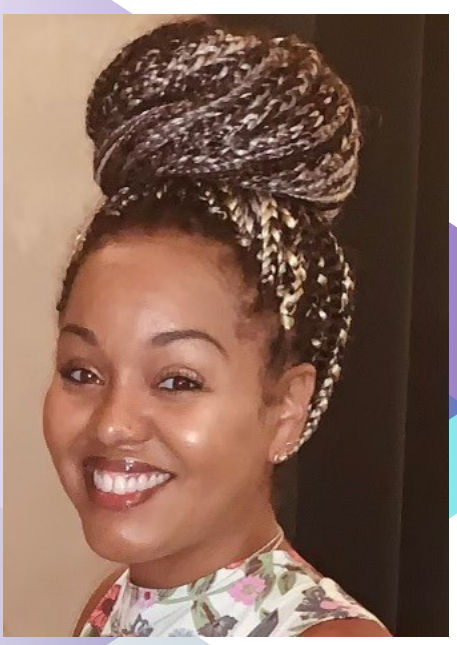
Problems in BCPSS continued from p. 16

Without education, the world our children face seems incomprehensibly cruel – perceptions that lead to hopelessness, frustration, anger, and sometimes rage.

But teachers need tools, too.

At present, teachers are small cogs on a big cogwheel designed to help the system. Although they are the main actors, teachers are at the base of the hierarchical system. They have no authority over the given universal curriculum. On top of that, unnecessary testing like *iReady* BoY (Beginning of year), MoY (Middle of year), and EoY (end of year), Amplify DIBELS 8, and interim assessments takes time and energy. According to Natalie Wexler, "testing has been seen as the means of ensuring that all children get the high-quality education, but in many ways, it's been just the opposite." "A two-year study released in 2015 revealed that kids were being forced to take too many mandated standardized tests—and that there was no evidence that adding testing time was improving student achievement."

Teachers need support from intervention systems. Para-educators and other intervention staff could support restorative practices like calming exercises for students. Baltimore City students need extra care and attention to cover the achievement gap. They need remedial interventions to reach the level at which the rich kids start. Even the most highly motivated teacher can't make up for generations of neglect by the system, lack of resources, filthy environments, and poor policies. But with the right resources, dedicated teachers can help students overcome these challenges and become great resources in our communities, helping all of us create better societies, one neighborhood at a time.



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Upcoming BTU Events & Meetings

MARCH 2021

Mar 15 @ 4:30pm - BTU Civil, Human and Women's Rights Committee
Mar 16 @ 10:30am - School Board Operations Committee
Mar 16 @ 3:30pm - School Board Policy Committee Meeting
Mar 17 @ 5:00pm - BTU Legislative Committee
Mar 17 @ 5:00pm - District Committee on Assessment
Mar 17 @ 5:15pm - BTU Clerical Committee
Mar 17 @ 6:00pm - BTU COPE (Committee on Public Education)
Mar 18 @ 4:30pm - BTU Fundraising Committee
Mar 18 @ 5:00pm - BTU Charter School Committee
Mar 18 @ 6:00pm - Parent Community Advisory Board
Mar 19 - Payday
Mar 23 @ 4:30pm - BTU Safety Committee
Mar 23 @ 5:00pm - School Board Meeting
Mar 24 @ 4:30pm - BR Meeting
Mar 25 @ 5:00pm - BTU Communications Committee
Mar 29-31 Spring Break

APRIL 2021

Apr 1 - 5 Spring Break
Apr 1 @ 4:00pm - BTU New Teacher Steering Committee
Apr 1 @ 6:30pm - BTU Special Events Committee
Apr 2 - Payday
Apr 2 - Paraprofessional Appreciation Day
Apr 6 @ 3:30pm - School Board Teaching and Learning Committee
Apr 6 @ 5:00pm - BTU Public Outreach and Community Relations
Apr 7 Half Day PD
Apr 7 @ 4:30pm - BTU International Committee
Apr 7 @ 4::30pm - BTU Negotiations Committee
Apr 7 @ 4:30pm - BTU PSRP Committee (formerly SRP)
Apr 8 @ 4:30pm - BTU Special Education Committee
Apr 8 @ 6:00pm - Executive Board Meeting
Apr 10 @ 6:10pm - LisTEN
Apr 12 @ 5:00pm - BTU Educational Issues Committee
Apr 12 @ 6:00pm - Special Education Community Advisory Committee
Apr 13 @ 5:00pm - School Board Meeting
Apr 14 @ 5:00pm - BTU Organizing Committee
Apr 15 @ 4:30pm - BTU Fundraising Committee
Apr 15 @ 5:00pm - BTU Charter School Committee
Apr 15 @ 6:00pm - Parent Community Advisory Board
Apr 16 - Payday
Apr 19 @ 4:30pm - BTU Civil, Human and Women's Rights Committee
Apr 20 @ 10:30am - School Board Operations Committee Meeting
Apr 20 @ 3:30pm - School Board Policy Committee Meeting
Apr 21 Administrative Professionals Day
Apr 21 @ 5:00pm - District Committee on Assessment
Apr 21 @ 5:00pm - BTU Legislative Committee
Apr 21 @ 5:15pm - BTU Clerical Committee
Apr 22 @ 5:00pm - BTU Communications Committee
Apr 27 @ 4:30pm - BTU Safety Committee
Apr 27 @ 5:00pm - School Board Meeting
Apr 28 @ 4:30pm - BR Meeting
Apr 30 - Payday

MAY 2021

May 3-7 - BTU Member Appreciation Week
May 4 @ 3:30pm - School Board Teaching and Learning
May 4 @ 5:00pm - Public Outreach/Community Relations Committee
May 5 Half Day PD
May 5 PSRP Conference (virtual)
May 5 @ 4:30pm - BTU International Committee
May 5 @ 4:30pm - BTU Negotiations Committee
May 5 @ 4:30pm - BTU PSRP Committee (formerly SRP)
May 6 @ 4:00pm - BTU New Teacher Steering Committee
May 6 @ 6:30pm - BTU Special Events Committee
May 9 Mother's Day
May 10 @ 5:00pm - BTU Educational Issues Committee Meeting
May 10 @ 6:00pm - Special Education Community Advisory Board
May 10 @ 6:10pm - LisTEN
May 11 @ 5:00pm - School Board Meeting
May 12 @ 4:30pm - BTU Benefits Committee
May 12 @ 5:00pm - BTU Organizing Committee
May 13 @ 4:30pm - BTU Special Education Committee
May 13 @ 6:00pm - Executive Board Meeting
May 14 - Payday
May 17 @ 4:30pm - BTU Civil Human and Women's Rights Committee
May 18 @ 10:30am - School Board Operations Committee Meeting
May 18 @ 3:30pm - School Board Policy Committee Meeting
May 19 @ 5:00pm - District Committee on Assessment
May 19 @ 5:00pm - BTU Legislative Committee
May 19 @ 5:15pm - BTU Clerical Committee
May 19 @ 6:00pm - BTU COPE (Committee on Public Education)
May 20 @ 4:30pm - BTU Fundraising Committee
May 20 @ 5:00pm - BTU Charter School Committee
May 20 @ 6:00pm - Parent Community Advisory Board
May 25 @4:30pm - BTU Safety Committee
May 25 @ 5:00pm - School Board Meeting
May 26 @ 4:30pm - BR Meeting
May 27 @ 5:00 - BTU Communications Committee
May 28 - Payday
May 31 Memorial Day