



## *ACLU Education Advocate*

### **In This Issue:**

**12.10.07**

- [Public Forum on the BCPSS Discipline Policy](#)
- [The Baltimore Sun Letter to the Editor: Build better schools from the bottom up](#)
- [The Examiner: Schools, worlds apart, cheer renovations](#)

### **Public Forum on the BCPSS Discipline Policy**

#### **Make Your Voice Heard**

The Baltimore City Public School System is re-writing its student discipline code. Attend the forum to learn about this work and to offer suggestions and feedback on a draft of the new code.

Monday, December 17th  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
Baltimore City Public School System  
200 E. North Avenue, Room #301

Light supper will be served

This public forum will include a brief presentation of the draft as well as small group discussions.

To RSVP and for more information, please call Baltimore Community School Connections at 410-332-0234.

### **The Baltimore Sun Letter to the Editor: Build better schools from the bottom up**

December 10, 2007

Build better schools from the bottom up

After years of trying to "turn around its worst schools" without making sufficient investment in our teachers and children, Maryland public officials are discouraged ("Fixing schools usually fails," Dec. 6). But it would be a shame if the citizenry concludes that low-income children just can't learn.

We should try listening to the teens who really want an education, such as the math literacy workers of the Baltimore Algebra Project.

They're more frustrated than any of us adults are.

But they have a prescription for improving education that makes sense: Provide arts, music, sports, challenging academics and every other aspect of a comprehensive education for every child; build new schools and renovate crumbling ones; have classes with fewer students so teachers can give individual attention; and provide jobs for every teenager who will work.

The Baltimore Algebra Project is looking at the problem from the bottom up, trying to create a demand among young people who attend the worst schools for a quality education.

They get little support from our leaders in government.

But it is tragic that they have to attend schools with lead in the water supply and insufficient labs or libraries.

City schools CEO Andres Alonso recently said that few projects have the record of the Baltimore Algebra Project. He was referring to the fact that students tutored through the project do learn.

The question is: Can the adults running our government and our school system listen and learn?

Charlie Cooper  
Baltimore

The writer is a member of Baltimore Education Advocates, a group that supports the work of the Baltimore Algebra Project.

## **The Examiner: Schools, worlds apart, cheer renovations**

Kelsey Volkmann  
2007-12-08

Half of the library shelves remain bare at Carver Vocational Technical High School in Baltimore City. Wires hang exposed on the halls. Half of the students do not even have a locker because so many are broken beyond repair.

Six miles and seemingly another world away, movers are putting the final touches on a renovation at the private Gilman School. The architect fitted all the classrooms with wireless Internet access, restored the stained glass windows in the chandelier-lighted and wood-paneled library and replaced all the chalkboards with dry-erase boards and interactive white boards, which allow teachers to project Web sites.

The two schools represent the disparities between the learning environments a public school budget and a \$20,000 tuition can buy in Baltimore City.

But students and administrators at both schools expressed excitement about their respective renovations, which, on Monday, start for Carver and end for

Gilman.

Carver Principal Michael Frederick smiles when he talks about motivating teachers to help students make adequate yearly progress on the state tests for the first time in the school's history last year. But he can't wait to see what will happen after the \$30 million rehab of the classrooms, auditorium, library and gymnasium.

"You know how you feel better in a clean car?" asks Frederick, as he sits in his office Friday, where the funky smell of dead rat lodged behind his bookcase punctuates the air.

"If we can do that well on tests now, can you imagine how well we will do with a new facility? We'll go through the roof."

Some of the classrooms at Carver are so hot, windows are propped open, despite the sleet tapping on sidewalks outside. But students and teachers prefer to have heat compared to last week when the furnace stopped working.

Frederick looks forward to turning on the air conditioning for those hot spring days in a building that has not seen renovations like this since 1953.

Librarian Cary Stanger wants more books and to be able to plug in all of the library's computers without blowing a fuse.

"I want to be able to drink from the water fountains," says Andrew Wallace, a junior.

Further north, light pours in from the five windows of a classroom at Gilman, where cushy, blue chairs line long tables beside two fireplaces. Framed, black-and-white photographs of suit-clad teenagers hang on the walls as a homage to earlier graduating classes.

A sign marks the entranceway into a gathering room specially designed as a hang-out for seniors, and a crew decorates a Christmas tree in the lounge.

The students' yearbook room boasts Apple computers and a photography dark room.

Ryan Carey, who has taught history at the all-boys school for five years, is so pleased with the \$15 million renovation at the upper school -- that's private school-speak for high school -- he's brought his parents who are visiting from Connecticut for a tour.

"This really is an unbelievable environment for teaching and learning," Carey says. "Hopefully, this raises the level of what we're doing in class."

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