

# BALTIMORE CHILDREN'S CABINET: YOUTH LITERACY TOWN HALL

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March 24, 2021



# WHAT BRINGS US TOGETHER?

With the support of Mayor Brand Scott, dozens of partners and hundreds of community members, the **Baltimore Children's Cabinet** is committed to improving the lives of Baltimore's children and youth.



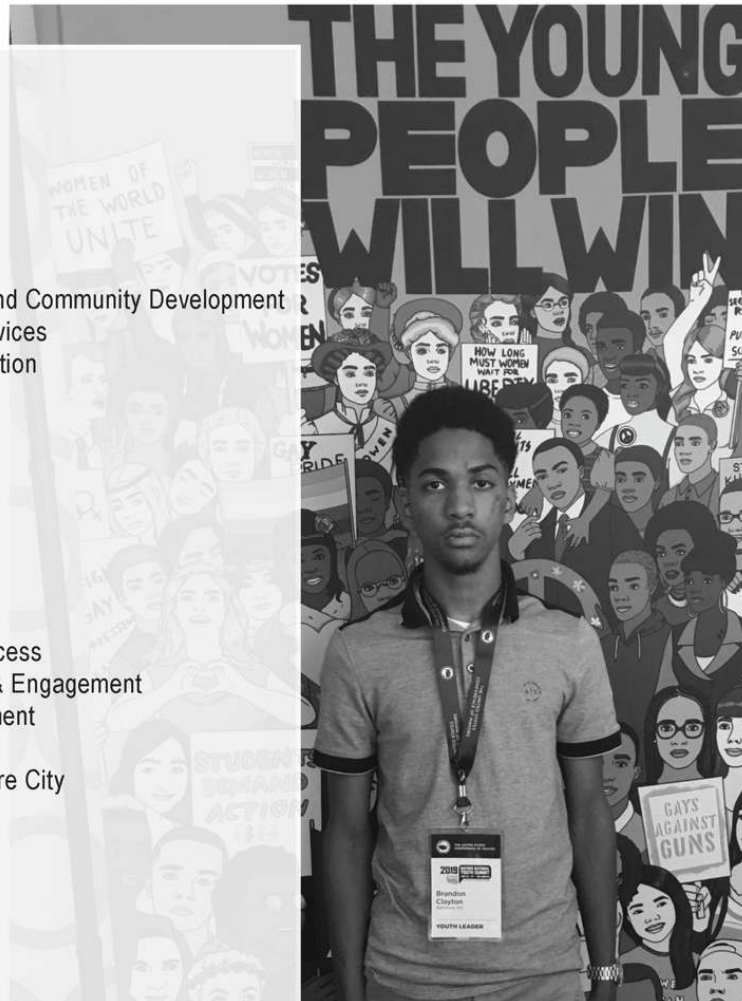
## BALTIMORE CHILDREN'S CABINET MEMBERS

### CITY AND STATE AGENCIES

Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development  
Baltimore City Department of Social Services  
Baltimore City Department of Transportation  
Baltimore City Health Department  
Baltimore City Public Schools  
Baltimore Police Department  
Baltimore City Recreation & Parks  
Department of Juvenile Services  
Department of Planning  
Enoch Pratt Free Library  
Housing Authority of Baltimore City  
Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success  
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety & Engagement  
Mayor's Office of Employment Development  
Mayor's Office of Homeless Services  
Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City

### EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Baltimore Children and Youth Fund  
Baltimore Civic Fund  
Baltimore City Community College  
Baltimore's Promise  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
Family League of Baltimore



The Baltimore Children's Cabinet convenes city and state agencies and key external partners to align, focus and increase the city's collective investment in our children and youth.



### The Unacceptable Odds\*

**63%**

children enter  
City Schools  
kindergarten  
unprepared

**>33%**

Baltimore  
youth are  
food insecure

**1 in 25**

City Schools students  
experience  
homelessness

**84%**

City Schools students  
enter 9th grade  
below reading level

**>40%**

City Schools students  
were chronically  
absent in 2019

**90%**

juvenile arrests in  
2018 involved Black  
& Brown youth

**69%**

homicide victims in  
Baltimore in 2018  
were Black men

\*Though in some cases not the most current, these are the data points the Children's Cabinet used in 2019-2020 to inform its priorities and key actions

The first thing the Children's Cabinet did when it was created, was ask:

*How are Baltimore's children doing?*

The answer:

Out of the gate, our children face unacceptable odds



These unacceptable odds quickly informed the priorities around which the Children's Cabinet is now focusing its work:

- 1 Increase early childhood development
- 2 Decrease youth food insecurity trauma-informed care for youth
- 3 Decrease youth homelessness
- 4 **Increase youth literacy**
- 5 Increase trauma-informed care for youth
- 6 Increase youth diversion practices
- 7 Break down historical barriers to success for Black boys and young men



# HOW DO WE DEFINE LITERACY?

“An individual’s ability to **read, write and speak** in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the **job**, in the **family** of the individual and in **society**.”



# OVERVIEW OF LITERACY TOWN HALL

**Share data** on current literacy outcomes for youth in Baltimore

**Discuss strategies** in City Schools + the impact of COVID on students and families

**Review the key actions** the Children's Cabinet has selected to increase youth literacy

**Listen to + engage with youth** leaders on a Call to Action for Baltimore



# THE DATA + THE STORY BEHIND THE DATA

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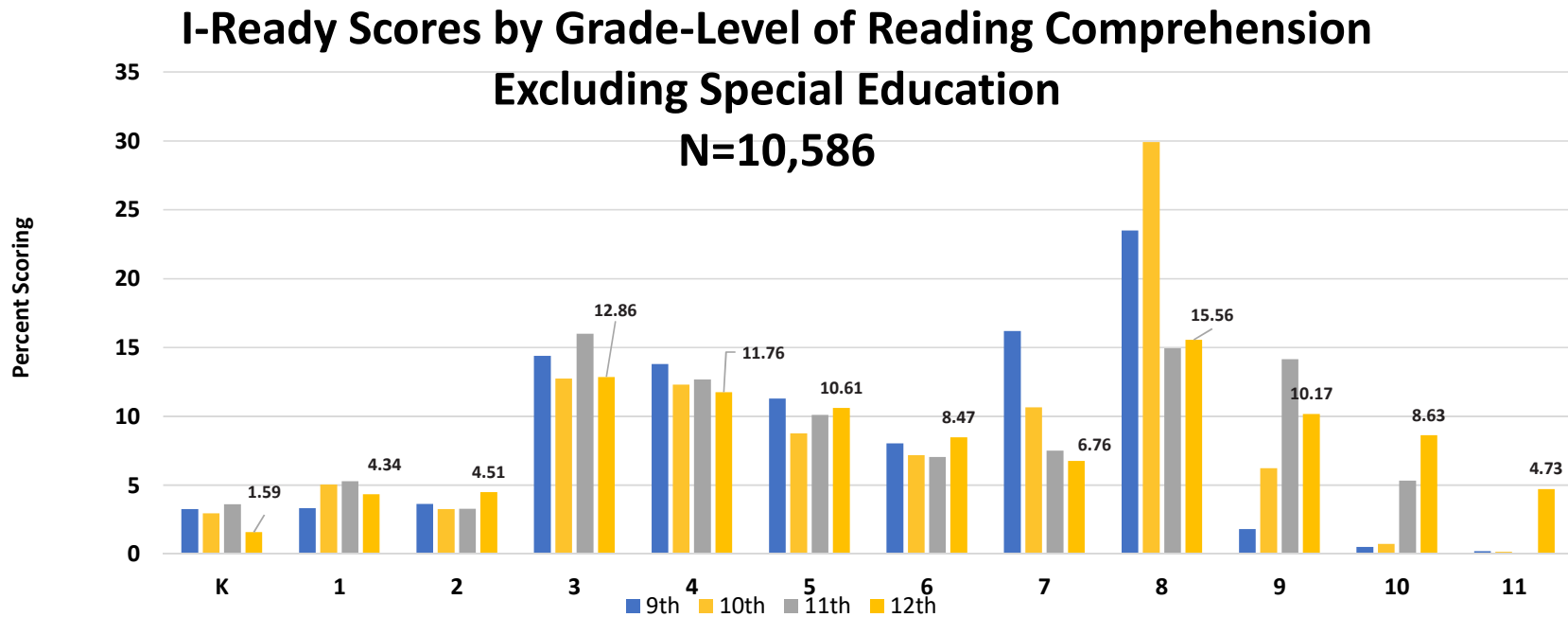
Julia Baez  
Baltimore's Promise





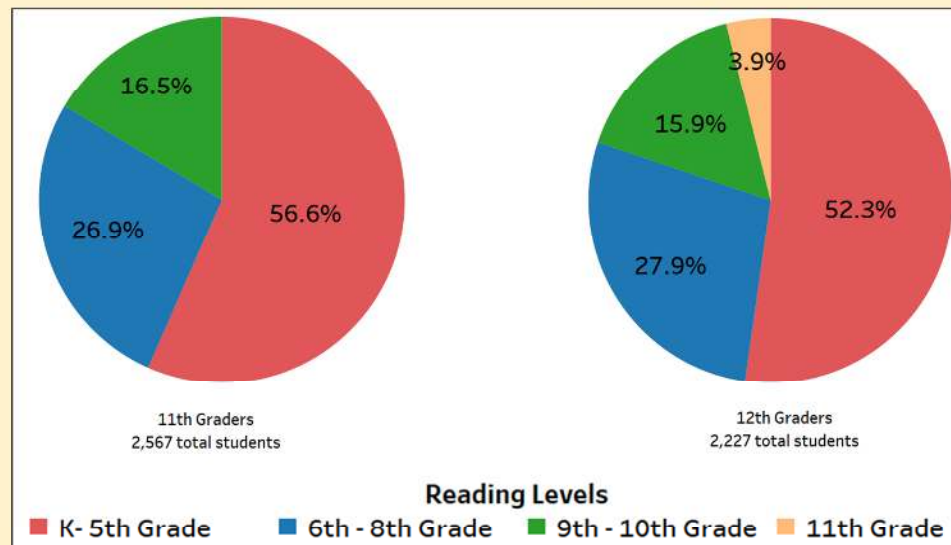
# LOOKING AT A SAMPLE OF ALL HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS:

(\*9<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS HERE ARE CURRENT 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS)



## High School: Literacy Rates

The graphs below show the reading levels of rising Baltimore City Public Schools 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders who took the i-Ready reading test in fall of 2017.



- Over 80% of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are reading at Middle School level or lower.
- Less than 0.05% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students are reading at reading at grade level.
- Only 3.9 % of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are reading at 11<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- 19% the students represented in this data are Special Education students.

BALTIMORE'S  
PROMISE

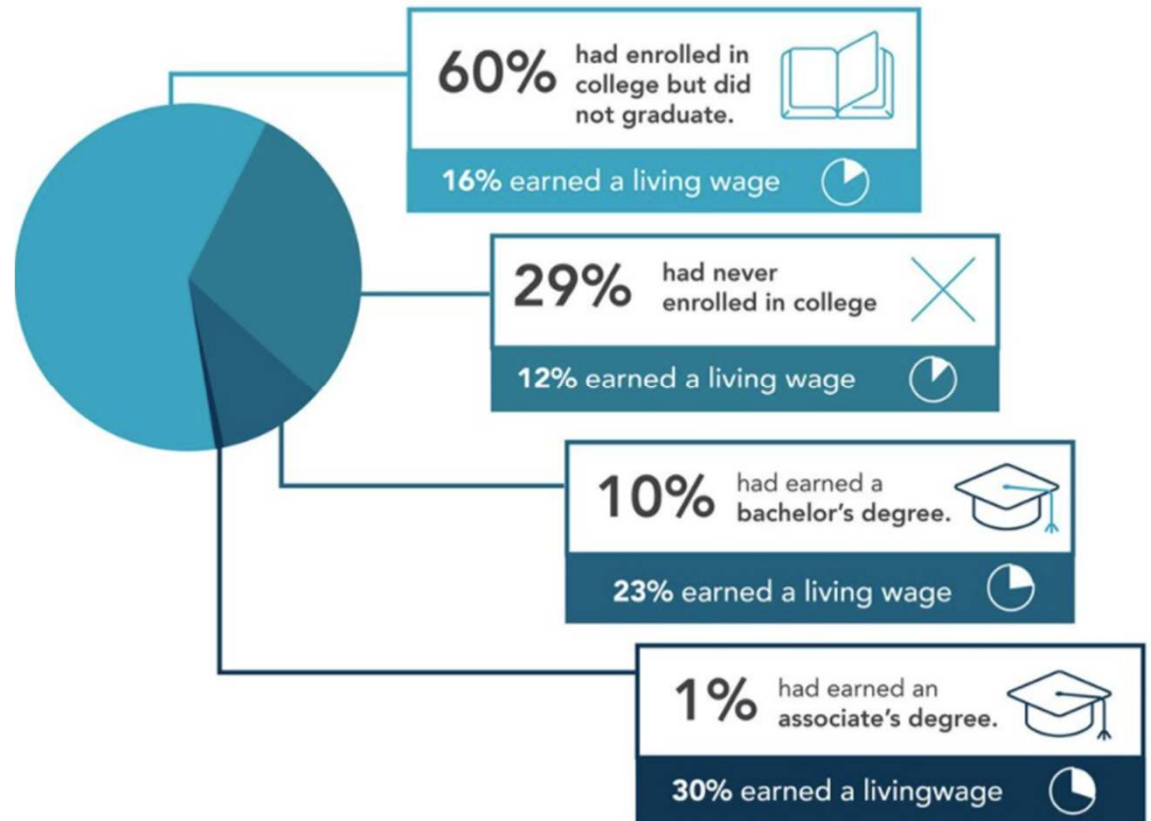


# TRACKING THE CITY SCHOOLS GRADUATING CLASS OF 2009:

AMONG *OPPORTUNITY YOUTH*, THEIR MEDIAN EARNINGS BY 2017 WERE ONLY AROUND **\$11,000 PER YEAR.**

ONLY **10%** OF 2009 CITY SCHOOLS GRADUATES EARNED A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE.

After 6 years...



# YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES IN BALTIMORE CITY

Findings:  
September 2018  
to August 2019

We identified **2,366** programs providing opportunities to support youth from birth through 24 years of age.\*

Data aggregators and programs reported approximately **96,800** seats supporting young people ages 0 - 24

## AGE GROUP WITH THE MOST OPPORTUNITIES?

**29%**

of estimated programming seats available\*\* were allocated to youth in the elementary grades—K to Grade 5.

## AGE GROUP WITH THE LEAST OPPORTUNITIES?

**7%**

of estimated programming seats available\*\* were allocated to ages 16–24, including Opportunity Youth and high school graduates.



## WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

When asked what a supportive, desired youth opportunity looked like, youth repeatedly indicated the following themes:

### SAFE SPACES, MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY

Youth feel physically and mentally safe, are able to relax, and can discuss personal issues with each other and/or trusted adults.

### ENGAGED, PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Programs have staff members who are knowledgeable, caring, and respectful.

### ACCESSIBILITY

Programs accommodate needs, including but not limited to cost, transportation, and allowing younger children and siblings to attend.



### EXPOSURE AND DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

Programs allow youth to experience new and interesting things.

### KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL BUILDING

Young people build skills through experiences or mentorships that will help them as they grow older.



# CITY SCHOOLS STRATEGIES + IMPACT OF COVID

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Tina Hike-Hubbard  
Chief of Communications,  
Engagement and Enrollment  
Baltimore City Public Schools



# CITY SCHOOLS LITERACY + STUDENT SUPPORT EFFORTS

## City Schools Blueprint

- Literacy
- Wholeness
- Leadership

## Community Schools

- 128 Community School Coordinators
- Food and materials distribution
- Device distribution and connectivity support
- Access to vaccine options/resources
- Wellness resources

## Family Engagement Efforts

- 176 Family Listening Tours across 88 schools
- 8,700+ views of Family University literacy-focus learning opportunities
- 500+ staff trained in Dual Capacity-Building Framework



# CITY SCHOOLS LITERACY + STUDENT SUPPORT EFFORTS

## Youth & Community Engagement

- Youth Ambassador Program
- Opportunities for students to provide feedback and get their questions answered – town halls, focus groups
- 20+ Town Halls
- 5 CEO Community Conversations to date
- Quarterly partner convenings
- PIE Portal

## Device + Resource Distribution

- 55,000 laptops purchased
- 47,000+ laptops distributed
- 15,500 hotspots purchased (up to 10k addl. hotspots coming from T-Mobile)
- 11,500+ hotspots distributed
- Still identifying students to receive
- Comcast Internet Essentials – 900 families connected, 6,000 spaces available
- 83 meal sites
- 3.16 million meals served through City Schools to students and families (since 3/2020)





# CITY SCHOOLS: IMPACT OF COVID

## Attendance

	SY20-21	SY 19-20
Attendance %	80.9%	89.5%
Virtual Log-in %	78.9%	n/a
Chronically Absent (10% or more)	45.9%	33.2%



## Academic Achievement

Grade Band	Q1 2019-20	Q1 2020-21
PK-1	29%	39%
2-5	30%	55%
6-12	38%	60%



# SO, WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT IT?

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Alex Warrick Adams  
Executive Director  
Elev8 Baltimore



KEY ACTION:  
EARN +  
LEARN  
SUMMER  
PROGRAM



Connects Paid **Summer Jobs** +  
**Career Exposure** + **Academic  
Tutoring**



**Mentorship** + **Culturally Relevant  
Experiences**



Wrap-Around **Supports** + Student  
**Leadership** Opportunities



# KEY ACTION: EXPANSION OF THE ADULT HIGH- SCHOOL



Offers a **Path to a High-School Diploma** for Young Adults



Creates a **Community Hub** for Resource **Support + Navigation**



Connects **Education, Employment + Real-Life Experiences** to Support Students + Families



# YOUTH PANEL

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Facilitator:  
Alex Warrick Adams



## Implementing the Action Plan

The 15 actions of the 2021 Children's Cabinet Action Plan will require collective action

**2021** will determine which actions

- can be executed effectively
- are having greatest impact
- are scalable

**2022** will focus on fewer actions and deeper execution

