

Transform Baltimore

Build Schools. Build Neighborhoods.

A Community Calls for New & Renovated Schools

More than 2,000 Baltimore parents and teachers have signed postcards to Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake calling for major improvements to Baltimore's school buildings, new revenue, and use of a financing plan modeled in Greenville, S.C.. The postcards also asked for comments about the often decrepit conditions facing many Baltimore students and teachers, and their hopes for the future of their local school buildings.

The following summary documents the comments given to the Mayor:

Barclay Elementary/Middle

- "Every time it rains my pre-k room floods"
- "My child has asthma and at times it's very uncomfortable"
- "Everything about the condition of the building bothers me: the bathrooms, ceilings, chipping paint, and how old it is"
- "Should feel like a good place to learn and grow"
- "Building should be bright, clean, solid, inspiring, and safe"

Bay-Brook Elementary/Middle

- "There is a lack of pride because of the poor conditions"
- "It looks gloomy"
- "We need a gym and music room"
- "There are leaks in the classrooms and hallways and random holes in the ceilings"
- "It should look like county schools"

Benjamin Franklin High School

- "Some areas are unkempt, with mildew and possible mold-like conditions"
- "The old parts of the building are sorely outdated"; "The rest of the building should look like the remodeled portion"
- "It should feel welcoming and bright, and stimulate a positive learning environment"

Booker T. Washington Middle

- "It should look and feel like the Mayor's office"
- "Heat, lack of water, windows that don't open"; "Should feel professional and conducive to learning"
- "It should look more like a college campus, less like a prison"
- "Heat, mold, and mice; students get dehydrated"
- "Very hot in summer and very cold in winter"

Calvin M. Rodwell Elementary

- "It should shine like Baltimore's Inner Harbor"
- "The school looked the same as it did when I graduated in 1992; it needs a total overhaul"
- "The school should look like a place you would want to send your child"
- "Our building is in need of expansion and additional classrooms"

City College High

- "It should look like a school in Montgomery County"
- "It should be safe, inviting, clean, and reflecting the beauty of the historic building and caliber of academic offerings"
- "It is embarrassing when visitors come and unacceptable for students who attend"
- "Everything is in disrepair; bathrooms don't function and athletic fields are run down; concrete steps coming into the school are chipped and unsafe"
- "It should look and feel like a show piece; it an historic building that houses a premier public school"

City Springs Elementary/ Middle

- "Old classrooms, lack of updated technology, lack of space. School needs to be modern, vibrant and technologically advanced"
- "It just looks sad and dreary, the pipes are always leaking and there is no air conditioning"
- Teacher and student bathrooms are unsanitary. There are cracks in the floors and wall joints. The school should be clean and comfortable, bright and welcoming."
- "Cafeteria has no heat or air conditioning and the kids suffer; schools should feel like home"

Collington Square Elementary/Middle

- "The ceilings leak and have mold"
- "No central air, no safe play areas, no elevator or entrance ramps for people with disabilities"
- "Everything is old, dark, and outdated"
- "Plant more trees and flowers around the property"

Commodore John Rogers Elementary/Middle

- "I would love to see more security and security cameras"
- "We need a better gym and playing field"
- "Since the renovations, nothing bothers me much about the building"

Cross Country Elementary/Middle

- "The school should look like a good school to go to"
- "Every other city building has A/C in this modern time, why not my child?"
- "It should have fresh paint, new windows, working restrooms, and be free of mice"
- "It needs A/C, ample parking, suitable windows and doors, and an up-to-date science lab"

Dallas Nicholas Elementary

- "It smells like urine in the bathrooms "
- "The bathrooms need clean water, and there should be walls up to the ceiling dividing rooms to reduce noise"
- "The restrooms and lunchroom need to be updated, the building needs natural light so it can be brighter"
- "It should be somewhere that the students want to come to learn"
- "The paint is chipping off the walls, the tile is cracked on the floors, the air conditioning is broken, and there are bugs everywhere"

Dr. Bernard Harris Elementary

- "Lunch room tables and chairs are broken, and the bathrooms stink"
- "I just think it's time for a make-over; this school needs to look more like a school and not a dungeon"
- "It's the same since I went here"
- "It should feel like a school kids enjoy going to, not an old looking building"
- "Safety of students is at risk; the condition of the school contributes to childrens' illnesses"

Dr. Rayner Browne Elementary/Middle

- "Children cannot drink water from the fountain and doors are falling off at the hinges"
- "Needs a colorful paint job and fully functional technology"
- "The roof leaks and it's cold"

Edgewood Elementary

- "The water fountains are hazardous and the bathrooms are outdated"; "A school building should provide an atmosphere for children to excel in"
- "It's old and not suitable for a world run by technology"; "It should feel welcoming and look like we're making progress"
- "The foundation on the front overhang is coming apart"
- "It is not handicap accessible; it is 55 years old and needs to be updated to 21st century standards; the gymnasium is outdated, and it needs better heating and cooling systems"

Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary

- "The school is in poor repair and it is a deterrent to learning"
- "It does not encourage respect & learning because it is not a respectful building"
- "Children cannot see out of the windows and sunlight does not come in"
- "It is dreary and under-resourced"
- "This building should be a beautiful safe learning environment, clean, maintained, child-friendly, and have good media centers"

Falstaff Elementary/Middle

- "It should look like it's changing with the times and make students feel eager to learn"
- "The heat and A/C don't work when they need to, bathrooms need to be more private, the auditorium is small, and the lighting outside is dim at best"
- "With renovations, the feeling of community and love for children would be felt"
- "It should look like we truly care for our children and the place where they receive their education"
- "School needs a face lift and a newer look, with less bars on the windows and brighter colors"

Forest Park High School

- "Some sections of are dark and isolated, and it makes the school feel uncomfortable"
- "It looks the same way it did when my father graduated"
- "Steps have cracks in them at the front entrance; it needs new windows, new classroom desks, chairs, doors, and athletic facilities like a track and football field"
- "The school needs to be updated as soon as possible; the bathroom doors don't even lock"
- "It should have the necessary technology to provide for advanced learning"

Francis Scott Key Elementary/Middle

- "The school is well taken care of, but at times in the summer it gets very hot"
- "It should be an environment that inspires learning and motivation to be proud"
- "There is poor lighting and not enough windows"

Freedom Academy

- "Every time I walk in the building I see a roach"
- "This school should look and feel like a real high school"
- "The school should look presentable to graduating 8th graders and their parents"
- "Extreme heating conditions, poorly constructed, almost like an abandoned building"
- "No working water fountains, leaks, no air conditioning, broken lockers, rusty radiators, and not enough student restrooms"

Green Street Academy

- "Every aspect should be appealing to motivate the students to succeed"
- "It's old and still looks the way it did when my siblings attended here in 1991 and 1992"; "It should look and feel like new schools built in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties"
- "The poor lighting in the hallways is unacceptable, landscaping is heavily needed, the parking lot needs repaving, and the bathrooms are outdated, dark, and poorly functioning"

Guilford Elementary/Middle

- "It has a musty odor no matter how much the building staff cleans"
- "It is hot in the lunch room and the ceiling is falling down"
- "The cafeteria is horrid and the school needs a happy aura"
- "Half the school building is in a temporary portable building that is too old; it was meant for certain number of years and that time has come and gone"

Gwynns Falls Elementary

- "The climate should be controlled so students can learn; no more early dismissals for heat"
- "The bathrooms have no doors on the stalls"

Hampstead Hill Academy

- "It should be bright, clean, and fully equipped with all the modern amenities"
- "It should be healthy, have operable windows, more open/play ground space, and be well-lit"
- "The ceiling tiles are very old and dirty"
- "Needs better runoff management by playground and steps, and should look more like buildings designed today from an architectural perspective - a happy refuge for children"
- "The vents do not work, and the heat and air conditioning need to be repaired"

Hilton Elementary

- "It should look presentable, safe, and feel like home"
- "There is no air conditioning, you can't see out of the windows, and needs updated bathrooms"
- "It needs to be open, fresh, and inviting so kids enjoy being here"

Holabird Elementary/Middle

- "This should be the safest, best kept and friendliest facility in our community"
- "Should feel less like a prison and more like a school"
- "No central air, bars on the windows, leaks, stains, mold, and the building just looks ancient"
- "I can't dress for the proper temperature as it is always too hot and cold, and the same for my students"
- "It's very hot and miserable, and I couldn't imagine being in here 8 hours"

John Eager Howard Elementary

- "It looks the same from the 1990's when I attended"
- "It should feel like you want to spend time here"
- "It should look professional and feel like home"
- "The eating area is too small and it is often too hot or too cold"; "It should feel like a Harford County school"
- "Air conditioning is needed because summer programs have had to be cancelled due to heat; the computer lab needs to be upgraded"

KIPP Harmony/ Ujima Village

- "The building is small, cramped, dingy, and raggedy"
- "It should not look like a bomb shelter"
- "No gym, standing water when it rains in both the back and front of building, uneven heat in winter, and it's not cool enough in summer"
- "This school should be welcoming, cheerful and have a moderate temperature throughout the building"
- "The school has no air conditioner and my son has asthma"; "It should look secure and feel comfortable when entering"

Margaret Brent Elementary

- "We could use more green space and room to play, plant and learn outside"
- "Chipped paint, poor lighting, dirty stained bathrooms, and in need of new desks and chairs"
- "The school should encourage learning because a student's attitude depends on their environment; a child will not advance if she thinks that her authority figure doesn't care enough to maintain the school"
- "The bathrooms are in poor condition, as well as the a/c and heating"; "The building should feel like you're in the comfort of your own home"

Medfield Heights Elementary

- "It shouldn't look so run down and old on the inside"
- "Desks and chairs are old and rusted, the building is infested with mice, and the cafeteria, gym, and auditorium is used alternatively; there is no air conditioning in some classes"
- "It should be like a private school setting"
- "The front awning looks like it's about to collapse; the school should make me feel safe about sending my kids"
- "Only half the school has air conditioning and you can't see out of any of the disgusting plastic windows"; "Less like a jail, more like a fun learning center"

Mt. Royal Elementary/ Middle

- "It should be a beautiful place where kids want to learn and teachers want to teach"
- "It's very hot; I do not see how the children can function throughout the day"
- "The building is old; the temperature is warm in spring and cool in winter, and the sound system and chairs in the auditorium need to be replaced"

The Mt. Washington School

- "Nothing in our building except for the bathrooms, but we are fortunate"; "We love our school, but we would like all schools in the city to be upgraded"
- "So many schools are not as nice as ours"; "All schools should look like ours"
- "I would love to see the hot third floor air conditioned"

Northwestern High

- "It should look like a place where students succeed; if we want students to do well, we need to show them we respect their learning"
- "Windows are in deplorable condition, half of the electrical outlets don't work, and there is poor outside lighting"
- "The schools in bad condition, such as ours, need major repairs so they can uplift our future kids"
- "There are windows made of cardboard and no A/C"; "It should feel like a school, not a sitting area to waste time"
- "Needs updates to the windows, football field, and gym"

Roland Park Elementary/Middle

- "Water leaks, which leads to mold and sickness; there is no a/c, and the heat in gym is often off"
- "Roaches should not be in the bathroom and kids should be able to drink out of the water fountains"
- "It is a beautiful historic building that is in such disrepair; it should be as magnificent on the inside as on the outside"
- "Grimy bathrooms, horrible hot and stuffy lunch room, dim lighting, cold classrooms, and a tiny indoor gym"
- "The building should look and feel like the city understands that the children who attend are its most precious assets"

Sarah M. Roach Elementary

- "It's old and needs updating throughout; the gym and auditorium are the same"
- "It should look like a professional, clean building that is welcoming and child-friendly"
- "It should be safe, but without feeling like a correctional facility"
- "It smells bad, the walls are bland, and there is no handicap entrance"
- "The county doesn't put in half as much money as city residents do but their schools are in way better shape; our school is old and in terrible shape; I would like the school to look like a school, on the inside and outside"

Thomas Johnson Elementary/Middle

- "The school building should be up-to-date; these are our children and their futures are at stake"
- "It looks bad, the windows leak, the bathrooms are terrible, and the landscaping is unattractive"
- "Maslow's hierarchy dictates that comfort and safety precede learning"
- "Poor HVAC, run down bathrooms, no gym or assembly hall, poor science facilities, and a dangerous playground"
- "It needs to be welcoming and inviting, and have a less dark and dirty feeling to it; I know it's not dirty, but it just feels that way"

Westside Elementary

- "It looks like a warehouse"
- "Missing tiles in floor, cracked walls, old doors, heat and air that only works every now and then"
- "Looks like an institution for criminals; children can barely see out the windows"
- "If the school systems in other counties can afford to build and update their schools, the city should be able to as well"
- "It should be a place where kids are proud to attend"

William Paca Elementary

- "It should look like the building the Mayor and all the leaders of the city and state work in"
- "The same problems that were here when I was coming here are still the problem"
- "It is dirty, with mice droppings, holes, and cracks in the floors, dust, no air conditioning, and old carpets that need to be removed"
- "There are holes in the tile floors, no windows, and inadequate ventilation system, especially for asthmatic students; It should look and feel like Sidwell Friends, Roland Park, or the other the schools where our leaders' children attend"

Wolfe Street Academy

- "It's old, and space is limited; our cafeteria is also the gym and auditorium"
- "The building should look and feel almost like home; I want my children to feel safe and comfortable"
- "The school needs new paint"