



Education Advocate

Mayor Rawlings-Blake and Dr. Alonso Establish Task Force to Address the \$2.8 Billion School Facilities Need

In a surprise announcement worthy of Thanksgiving week, Mayor Rawlings-Blake and Dr. Alonso today declared their support for the key recommendation in the [ACLU's Buildings for Academic Excellence](#) facilities study -- to collaborate with the state to devise a financing plan to meet the \$2.8 billion needed to renovate City School buildings. Flanked by City Council members, Rawlings-Blake and Alonso announced the creation of a School Construction Task Force charged with making recommendations for the plan by February 20, 2011.

"The Mayor today stepped away from business-as-usual and declared that Baltimore can find solutions to the huge problem of deficient school buildings," noted Bebe Verdery, Director of the ACLU's Education Reform Project. "Dr. Alonso and the Mayor have committed themselves to finding a new path to modernize school buildings for children, teachers, and communities."

Echoing points from the ACLU's study, the Mayor declared that current funding is not sufficient to meet the need and that alternative financing models that have been successful in renovating schools in other cities will be explored. Dr. Alonso noted that changes in state law will be needed in order to take a more comprehensive approach to school renovation and construction. The task force includes the director of the state's school construction program, as well as City and City Schools' officials.

[Click Here to read the Mayor's press release on the School Construction Task Force](#)

Michelle Green, President of the Parent and Community Advisory Board, commented, "I am pleased to see that the mayor and CEO are stepping up to address the \$2.8 billion need for improving school buildings by forming this task force. It is essential that state play a major role in making this happen, that it's a true partnership. PCAB will stay engaged with the school board, the Task Force, and the ACLU to ensure that the recommendations are in the best interest of students and families."

To get involved with the Campaign to Modernize Baltimore City School Buildings, contact Frank Patinella at 410.889.8550 x 123 or patinella@aclu-md.org.

American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland Education Reform Project

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