

EDUCATION ADVOCATE

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The State of Maryland has failed to address the abysmal conditions in Baltimore City schools, leading to classrooms without heat and students wearing winter coats while trying to learn. **Baltimore’s children in public schools have been shortchanged for decades.**

Water coolers instead of fountains because of lead, frequently breaking heating and air conditioning systems (or no A/C at all), buildings without sufficient fire alarm or security systems, combined with lack of funding for social workers, art, music, after-school programs, and more. These are the inequitable conditions Baltimore children have faced for decades and are still facing today.

Joined with concerned parents and families in Baltimore City, [ACLU of Maryland and NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.](#) sent a letter Tuesday morning to Governor Hogan. The letter calls on the State to address the massive gap between current and constitutionally adequate educational funding and the immediate infrastructure needs of Baltimore City’s aging school buildings, which disproportionately harm students of color.

“I feel as though the State doesn’t care about my kids. If they did my kids would have the heat, they would have the air, the teachers would have the necessary things to teach the kids,” said Michael Boyd, a parent of children in Baltimore City public schools. “My overall concern is one, condition of the buildings, two, safety, and three, the supplies needed for them to get a good education. And I feel as though they are failing in all three parts.”

[WATCH VIDEOS OF MICHAEL BOYD \(PARENT\) AND DESHAWNA BRYANT \(STUDENT\) DISCUSS CONDITIONS IN BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS](#)

The reality is that Baltimore City schools have been chronically underfunded by the State for decades in both facilities and educational programs. This has created a situation of such serious racial disparities that Baltimore City students' right to an education is in crisis. Adding to that, the recent announcement that the Kirwan Commission's repeatedly delayed final report and funding proposals will not be fully considered during the 2019 General Assembly, the "adequacy gap" in Baltimore City will continue to grow and the constitutional violations will continue unabated.

"The State of Maryland is long past due in meeting its constitutional obligation to the children of Baltimore," said Dana Vickers Shelley, Executive Director of the ACLU of Maryland. "Our children can't wait any longer. We must act decisively to ensure that the compounded effects of decades of chronic racial disparities in education funding do not hold back another generation of Black and Brown students in our State from realizing their dreams and full potential."

To have a strong Maryland, we need to have a strong Baltimore. Across the state, we need to come together to make sure children in Baltimore and other similar major regions with funding disparities have the resources they need to succeed.

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