

ACLU Maryland

# EDUCATION ADVOCATE

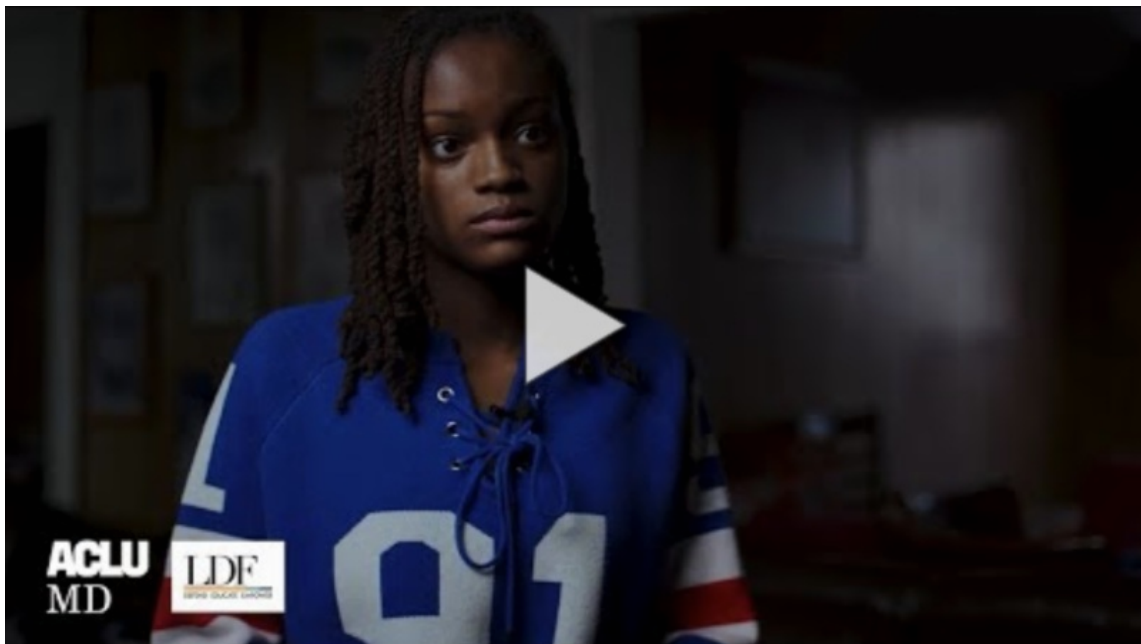
Get Engaged

## BREAKING NEWS

Maryland public schoolchildren deserve to have access to an equitable education with quality academic instruction in modern, safe school buildings, guaranteed by the state constitution.

That's why, today, concerned parents and families in Baltimore City joined with ACLU of Maryland (ACLU) and NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) in a return to court to reopen the historic Bradford class action lawsuit that spurred the "Thornton" statewide funding formula in 2002.

[READ THE PRESS RELEASE AND WATCH VIDEOS](#)



“I would like our leaders to know that students in Baltimore also have a dream, and just because some of us aren’t rich enough to have those dreams come true doesn’t mean they should be taken away from us. The fact that we don’t have heating or air conditioning or all this funding, takes away from those dreams and it makes it harder for people to want to go to college.”

## **Deshawna Bryant, a senior at City College High School in Baltimore**

We are all working on this together to ensure that another generation of Black and Brown students in Baltimore are not held back from realizing their dreams because of racial inequities in education funding.

**Children in Baltimore go to schools that have been shortchanged for decades.** Over time, Baltimore City students have been deprived of over \$2 billion in constitutionally required funding.

**This chronic underfunding of Baltimore’s public schools has a real effect on children:**

- Deshawna Bryant, a senior, has sickle cell anemia and spent a week in the hospital after a day in an unheated classroom last winter.
- Stefanie Croslin’s 13-year-old son, Cohen, loves science, but his school does not have Bunsen burners or an eye wash station, much less the advanced computer technology available in neighboring Baltimore County. Teachers, instead, have had to collect materials donated by parents to design experiments. Ms. Croslin worries what will happen if he never receives the learning necessary to succeed in college. Similarly, her younger son, 11-year-old Cyrus, was devastated when his school had to cancel music class. It was his favorite subject.
- Angela Gant’s 14-year-old daughter D’Nyah used to excel in math, but she recently began to struggle. Ms. Gant wants to help her, but her school no longer offers the tutoring services that were available when her older daughter graduated.

Children across the city, most of whom are Black and Brown and live in poverty, are experiencing these same problems, and more.

Baltimore City's school buildings are by far the oldest in the state. **Over 80 percent of the system's 158 schools are in "very poor" or "poor" condition.** The well-documented problems include lack of drinkable water due to un-remediated lead in water pipes, ancient boiler systems, roofs in need a replacement, and deficient electrical and fire safety systems. Not to mention that many schools don't have the funding they need for after-school programs, counselors and social workers, or stocked libraries and working computers. Many other schools have mold and pest problems.

**[These problems mirror those highlighted when the Bradford case was originally filed, almost a quarter century ago.](#)**

The ACLU has worked to ensure that the needs of students in Baltimore City – and other jurisdictions that have majority Black and Brown student enrollments and that have higher concentrations of poverty – are fully funded in the recommendations of the State's Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, the "Kirwan" Commission. But due to the Kirwan Commission's delayed final report and legislation just getting introduced in the General Assembly this week, the funding needs of children in Baltimore City seem unlikely to be fully addressed during this session.

**It's past time for the state to fulfill its constitutional duty to the children of Baltimore City.**

**[Learn more about the Bradford lawsuit and hear directly from students and parents.](#)**

**READ MORE**

"We must invest in our future leaders, which is our children, today! Our children have the right to a great education. They need access to the tutoring and support resources in schools that help them learn and thrive."

***Angela Gant, mother of two children currently in  
Baltimore City Public Schools***

*P.S. We need to hear from more parents, teachers, and students in Baltimore City. Please share this survey so we can learn more about the need for more staff and programs and conditions in schools across the city.*

**PLEASE SHARE THIS SURVEY**



## **American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland / Education**

Dana Vickers Shelley, Executive Director

Bebe Verdery, Education Director

Frank Patinella, Senior Education Advocate

Kimberly Humphrey, Legislative Counsel, Education

Justin Nalley, Policy Analyst

Nicole McCann, Communications & Engagement Strategist

Ashley Jones, Education Intern

Brittany Lewis, Education Intern

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