



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

DATE: April 14, 2020

SUBJECT: Request from the Baltimore City Public Schools for a Calendar Modification-
Addendum #1

PURPOSE:

To consider the waiver request to open school on the Friday before Easter and the Monday after Easter as school closure make-up days for the 2019-2020 school year.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Education Article §7-103 requires schools to be open for student attendance for 180 days and closed on the following public school holidays: Thanksgiving Day and the day after; Christmas Eve and from then through January 1; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Presidents' Day; the Friday before Easter and from then through the Monday after Easter; Memorial Day; and primary and general election days. Subsection (b) (iv) provides the State Board the authority to permit schools to open on holidays if normal school attendance is prevented because of natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The closure of schools starting on March 16, 2020 to slow the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in school communities around the State creates challenges for local school systems to meet the 180-day school year statutory requirement. While school systems deliberate the best ways to make up lost instructional time, some may want to consider opening schools on holidays. The request submitted by Baltimore City Public Schools on April 7, 2020 asks for a waiver to use April 10, 2020, the Friday before Easter, and April 13, 2020, the Monday after Easter, as school closure-make-up days.

ACTION:

It is being requested that the Maryland State Board of Education approve the waiver to open school on April 10, 2020, the Friday before Easter, and April 13, 2020 the Monday after Easter, for Baltimore City Public Schools as school closure make-up days for the 2019-2020 school year.

Members of the Maryland State Board of Education
April 14, 2020
Page Two

Attachment: Waiver Request from Baltimore City Public Schools.

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bernard C. "Jack" Young
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Linda Chinnia
*Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners*

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

April 6, 2020

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

RE: Waiver Request for Opening Schools on April 10th and April 13th

Dear Dr. Salmon:

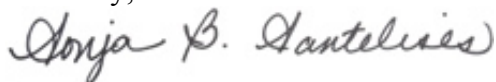
On March 19, 2020 the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners considered and approved modifications to the academic calendar for school year 2019-2020. As required, the academic calendar meets the 180-day requirement for student attendance defined in Education Article §7-103, Annotated Code of Maryland.

City Schools shifted its previously scheduled spring break, in light of your recommendation on March 12, 2020, when a temporary closure of Maryland public schools was declared due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as subsequent guidance you provided during the CEO's conversation with the State Superintendent. Pursuant to the action of the School Board of Commissioners, City Schools utilized the period from March 20th to March 27th for spring break instead of its previously scheduled period, April 6th through April 13th. The School Board of Commissioners also authorized the submission of a waiver for City Schools to open on Good Friday, April 10th, and the Monday after Easter, April 13th, to leverage these days to provide continuity of learning, with the intent that these days would count to the required 180-days of instruction.

Respectfully, City Schools requests the State Board of Education's approval to open schools for student instruction, through continuity of learning, on Good Friday and the Monday after Easter in accordance with Education Article §7-103, Annotated Code of Maryland, given the above rationale.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Enclosed you will find materials from City Schools' March 19, 2020 public board meeting.

Sincerely,



Sonja Brookins Santelises, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

CC: Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners