



Elizabeth Degi Mount
Executive Director
443.966.DBFA
Elizabeth@BaltimoreFamilies.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DBFA Calls on Gov. Hogan to Release \$130M as Baltimore Schools Face Worst Budget Crisis in 15 years

Baltimore, MD- As Baltimore City Public Schools' (BCPS) leaders grapple with the worst budget crisis in 15 years, the Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance (DBFA) is calling upon Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to release \$130M from the supplemental budget to fund the shortfall. DBFA is organizing thousands of city families to push the Governor to “#Releasethe130” to assist schools as BCPS cleans up decades of fiscal mismanagement.

DBFA, which works to reverse the trend of middle-class flight from Baltimore City, has seen **an alarming uptick in families planning to move out of the city** following BCPS CEO Dr. Sonja Santelises' announcement of the \$129M deficit. Downtown schools and schools bordering waterfront communities serve some of the most racially and socioeconomically diverse student populations. These communities represent **successful examples of integration in one of the nation's most segregated school systems.**

“Families leaving the city poses a serious threat to efforts to diversify our schools, and has the potential to hurt the budget for years to come,” said DBFA executive director Elizabeth Degi Mount. State funding is determined in part by the number of students enrolled in BCPS. Between \$25-27M of the current deficit stems from a drop in enrollment.

#Releasethe130 calls attention to the shortfall's drastic consequences in very real and solid terms. DBFA is collecting stories from students, parents and teachers highlighting the impact of the deficient. *“We need to make sure our Governor understands that this is not a hypothetical problem. These are not just Baltimore's children, they are*

Maryland's children. Real kids, in real classrooms, with very real futures that we cannot play politics with." said Eileen Wold, DBFA Board President.

More than 1,000 families will "march forth on March 4th" to demand the supplemental budget to be released, during a press rally and march at the Inner Harbor.

The collected stories will be displayed during the event, and delivered directly to Governor Hogan following the march. The event follows the Baltimore Education Coalition's (BEC) budget rally on February 23, 2017. As a member organization of the BEC, DBFA will be deploying parents and students to the Annapolis rally to demand equitable support for Baltimore schools.

"The CEO is doing the right thing to make sure city and state funds are used responsibly. #Releasethe130 is a clear call to Governor Hogan to ensure BCPS has the necessary support to come through this challenging process without sustaining further enrollment losses," said DBFA executive director Elizabeth Degi Mount. "In many ways, the deficient represents CEO Dr. Santelises' commitment to responsible, transparent budgeting, which we know is one of the governor's top priorities."

Information about #Releasethe130, including **toolkits for parents and teachers and details about "March forth on March 4th", are available at DBFA's website, BaltimoreFamilies.org**, and at Releasethe130.org. Follow updates on at #Releasethe130.

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DBFA is an independent, non-profit alliance of parents, educators, students and community activists devoted to retaining and supporting Baltimore families. Recognizing the critical role families play in the economic stability and growth of the city, DBFA is dedicated to building a critical mass of families who call Charm City home.

www.baltimorefamilies.org

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