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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BALTIMORE TEACHERS UNION CALLS FOR QUALITY AGENDA FOR
BALTIMORE CITY STUDENTS AND AN END TO POLITICS**

We are deeply disappointed in the response from City Board chair Marnell Cooper in the Baltimore Sun dismissing our comments to our members as a response to the “current political tenor.” Let me be clear, Baltimore Teachers Union will not stop advocating for our students because of the political climate ushered in by the election of Donald Trump. Our goal is now more than ever to have educators advocate for a real quality agenda for our students that have not been addressed by the current school board.

That quality agenda for students includes:

1. Well-resourced classrooms and schools - qualified staff who are supported and developed throughout their careers that keeps experienced teachers in Baltimore.
2. Wrap around services and real supports in schools to help mitigate the challenging environments and out of school factors our students face every day;
3. Safe and supportive environments that connect families to the services/resources students need to be successful;
4. Their families and parents to be welcomed as partners in their education;
5. Creating structures where the voices of educators are valued and heard regarding classroom needs;
6. Schools responsive to concerns, needs and contributions of students, families and communities where they live.
7. Those closest to them - teachers and paras - invested with the decision-making power and respect to advocate on their behalf for a quality education and learning environment.

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Mr. Cooper has not dealt honestly or fairly with the union and nearly all of his actions have been political. We have been on the front line for the students of Baltimore and their families, whether fighting Gov. Hogan in Annapolis for equitable funding, or collaborating with community partners to promote the community school strategy throughout the city.

We are deeply disappointed that Mr. Cooper would try to deflect from the ineptitude of Baltimore City Schools by painting this as a political diversion instead of working with educators to improve our schools. If he wants to seriously work for the welfare of the students, he should ensure that City Schools is working at maximum efficiency to benefit the students, families and educators of Baltimore City.

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