

R00A02

Aid to Education

Maryland State Department of Education

Response to the Analyst's Review and Recommendations

House Education and Economic Development Subcommittee –
February 28, 2018

Senate Education, Business, and Administration Subcommittee –
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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) welcomes this opportunity to share with the Committee some of its success stories and to address questions raised by the analyst.

Managing for Results: PARCC Results

MSDE should update the committees on which LEAs are administering optional PARCC assessments, such as grade 9 ELA and Geometry.

The following table shows the number of local school systems administering optional PARCC assessments.

Assessment	#LEAs
ELA 9	8
ELA 11	19
Algebra II	24
Geometry	16

MSDE should update the committees on the State’s timeline for achieving the goal that students are college and career ready when leaving high school.

The 2016-17 school year marks the second year of implementation of the State’s College and Career Readiness Act of 2013. College and career readiness assessment is determined for all students by the end of grade 11. Students who are not deemed college and career ready by the end of grade 11 are provided transitions courses in grade 12 and then reassessed at the end of grade 12. It is important to note that students currently enrolled in grade six, also referred to as the Class of 2024, and are the first cohort of students to receive instruction aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for their entire academic career.

The State’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan sets proficiency at Performance Levels 4 and 5 which is considered on-track for College and Career Readiness. A proficiency score at Performance Level 4 or 5 on the English 11 and Algebra II assessments denotes college and career readiness.

The State’s graduation requirements are differentiated for students based on their current grade. Students currently enrolled in grades 7-12 are required to score at Performance Levels 3, 4, or 5 to pass the English 10 and Algebra 1 assessments. Students currently enrolled in grades 6 or lower are required to score at Performance Levels 4 or 5 to pass the English 10 and Algebra 1 assessments.

Contingent Reduction Affected Programs

Teacher Induction, Retention and Advancement Act

The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends altering the BFRA provision to maintain the mandate for the TIRA and level fund the program at its fiscal 2018 amount for fiscal 2019 through 2022.

While full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints. This program provides an opportunity for first year teachers to transition into their career with the support of hands-on, experienced mentors, and will have a long-term impact on new teachers and the students in their classrooms.

QTIs (\$2.1 Million Increase)

Due to updated expectations, DLS recommends rejecting the BFRA provision, and instead recommends reducing funding for the program by \$1.3 million to fund it according to updated cost estimates assuming that the increased stipend amount is retained.

While full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints. Increasing the stipend amounts may encourage more Nationally Board Certified teachers to teach schools with the greatest needs.

Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program (\$300,000 Increase)

As \$4.7 million has already been awarded to grantees, DLS recommends altering the BFRA provision to maintain the mandate and level fund the program at its fiscal 2018 amount for fiscal 2019 through 2022.

While full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints. This program provides low-income students mentoring and guidance services necessary for these students to realize their goal of attending college.

Federal Fund Changes

Striving Readers Grant (\$14.3 Million Increase)

MSDE should comment on how it plans to distribute these additional funds.

Maryland was awarded one of 17 federal Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grants. The State's Comprehensive Literacy Plan, developed based on a needs assessment and with special emphasis on disadvantaged children will be the starting point for local school system funding. Local school systems must conduct needs assessments and develop local literacy plans that are aligned to the State's plan, use evidence-based strategies, and focus support for disadvantaged children. Funds must be allocated proportionately to support birth to age 5 (15%), kindergarten to grade 5 (40%), and middle and high school (40%). Local school systems will submit applications through March 19, 2018.

Children At-Risk (\$13.2 Million Increase)

MSDE should comment on how it plans to distribute these additional funds.

Federal funding for Children At-Risk funds primarily support two programs in Maryland: the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grants (Title IV, Part A) and the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) Grants (Title IV, Part B).

SSAE Grants are formula grants to LEAs to increase capacity to provide all students with access to a well-rounded education, improve school conditions for student learning, and improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. FY 2018 grant amounts range between \$16,100 and \$1,379,000, which will be used for Advanced Placement exam fees, STEM instruction, enhanced arts and music programs, activities to prevent drug abuse, suicide prevention, addressing bullying and harassment, technology professional development for educators, and increasing access to data and technology.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grants are competitive awards to create community learning centers that provide students with academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional services designed to complement their regular academic program. Currently, 46 community and faith-based organizations and 22 local school systems receive grants. Annual grant awards range from \$50,000 to \$400,000.

Title I – Educationally Deprived Children (\$6.6 Million Decrease)

MSDE should comment if \$14.2 million for school improvement grants in fiscal 2018 represents an accurate estimate of expenditures.

Maryland estimates that its expenditures will be less than expected in FY 2018 due to planned activities not being implemented at the start of the school year. The FY 2018 appropriation is comprised of available federal funds from prior fiscal years. The federal ESSA law discontinued State School Improvement grants, however States were given additional time to spend the funds awarded prior to ESSA. States have until FY 2020 to spend FY 15 funds and until FY 2021 to spend FY 2016 and FY 2017 funds.

Federal School Improvement Grant funds support schools in improvement. As Maryland transitioned from NCLB to ESEA Flex to ESSA, the State’s accountability system along with the definition of schools in improvement was also in transition. As Maryland implements its approved ESSA plan, School Improvement Grant funds will be allocated to support evidence-based improvement efforts in focus schools and in comprehensive needs schools.

Pathways in Technology Early College High School Program

MSDE should provide the enrollment of students at P-TECH schools in Allegany and Prince George’s counties, as well as the expected enrollment and industry partners for the three P-TECH schools receiving planning grants in fiscal 2018. MSDE should also explain how the fiscal 2019 allowance was determined and how much of the funding is intended to

cover required community college grants. Finally, MSDE should also comment on whether funds designated for planning grants for a P-TECH school on the Eastern Shore were returned to the State and how much unused planning grant funding is anticipated to be returned at the end of fiscal 2018.

As requested in the analysis, the following tables represent the enrollment and industry partner information for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.

2017-18 Enrollment	
LEA	Enroll
Allegany	22
Prince Georges - Health Services	33
Prince Georges - Hospitality Services	29

2018-19 P-TECH Schools			
LEA	School	Est. Enroll	Partner
Baltimore City	New Era Academy	50	Port of Baltimore
Baltimore County	Dundalk High School	30	Whiting Turner Contracting, KCI Technologies
Montgomery County	Clarksville High	32	Daly Computers, Information Technology Foundation

The fiscal 2019 allowance was developed based on estimated P-TECH enrollment. MSDE estimates the Supplemental School grants based \$750 per student and 557 projected students. The fiscal 2019 allowance also includes funds for the Supplemental College Grants to Allegany Community College, Baltimore City Community College, and Prince George’s Community College.

The Eastern Shore P-TECH planning grant was finalized in November of 2017. The balance of 99,934.40 will be reverted.

Fiscal 2018 planning grants were awarded to three local school systems – Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Prince George’s County. The grant awards totaled \$292,719. The remaining unobligated appropriation will revert at the close of fiscal 2018.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

Add the following language:

1. **Provided that the Maryland State Department of Education shall notify the budget committees of any intent to transfer the funds from program R00A.02 Aid to Education to any other budgetary unit. The budget committees shall have 45 days to**

review and comment on the planned transfer prior to its effect.

MSDE Concur.

2. Amend the following language to the general fund appropriation:

Further provided that this appropriation shall be reduced by ~~\$5,000,000~~ \$300,000 contingent upon the enactment of legislation ~~repealing~~ altering the mandate that funding be provided for the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program to fund the program at its fiscal 2018 level of \$4.7 million.

As noted above, while full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints.

3. Amend the following language to the general fund appropriation:

General Fund Appropriation, provided that this appropriation shall be reduced by ~~\$5,000,000~~ \$4,045,000 contingent upon the enactment of legislation ~~repealing~~ altering the mandate that funding be provided for the Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Pilot Program.

As noted above, while full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints.

4. Amend the following language to the general fund appropriation:

~~Further provided that this appropriation shall be reduced by \$2,100,000 contingent upon the enactment of legislation reducing the mandated stipend for teachers who hold a certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards~~

As noted above, while full funding for this program would be optimal, MSDE understands this may not be possible given the current budgetary constraints.

5. Reduce the appropriation for the Quality Teacher Incentives program based on updated expectations for the number of teachers with National Board Certification teaching in schools with comprehensive needs.

Amount Reduction	
\$1,280,000	GF

Total General Fund Reductions

\$1,280,000

MSDE concurs.