

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 715

(Chair, Ways and Means Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - Education)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Institutions of Higher Education - Teacher Preparation Programs - Accreditation
and Approval**

This departmental bill authorizes the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to approve the offering of teacher preparation programs by qualified institutions of higher education, in addition to the option of an institution receiving national accreditation. The bill clarifies that an institution must have approval to operate by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) or under operation of law in order to offer an undergraduate or graduate teacher preparation program in the State. MSDE and MHEC must recognize an accrediting agency for national accreditation, instead of the U.S. Department of Education under current law.

The bill applies prospectively. An institution of higher education that was in compliance with the provisions of § 11-208 of the Education Article as of July 1, 2016, must be deemed to have remained in compliance unless and until the institution receives notification from MSDE, in consultation with MHEC, that it is in violation of the bill.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE and MHEC can handle the additional responsibilities under the bill using existing resources. Absent the bill, the number of teachers who will need to be individually evaluated by MSDE increases significantly as explained below. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local school systems will be able to hire teachers who attended teacher preparation programs in Maryland without submitting individual certification requests to MSDE. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: MSDE has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Bill Summary: An institution of higher education must determine whether to seek national accreditation or approval by MSDE.

When determining whether an accrediting agency is recognized, MSDE and MHEC must consider whether the national accrediting agency uses national professional standards that are comparable to the standards that are used by MSDE when approving a teacher preparation program. MSDE and MHEC must jointly agree on the standards used by MSDE to determine approval.

MSDE must develop and administer a technical support program, available on request, for programs seeking approval by MSDE. The bill establishes that the technical support program already required for those seeking national accreditation is to be available *on request* as well.

The bill also repeals waiver authority for national accreditation requirements, discussed under current law below.

Current Law: In general, to offer a teacher preparation program (undergraduate or graduate) that would certify a recipient to teach, an institution of higher education in the State must have national accreditation. The State Superintendent may grant a waiver from the national accreditation requirements to any liberal arts college with a full-time equivalent enrollment of not more than 2,000 students and any nationally recognized professional school of fine arts specializing in music or art. “National accreditation” is defined as a teacher education accreditation by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and endorsed by MSDE.

In conjunction with accrediting agencies, MSDE must develop and administer a program of technical support to assist institutions of higher education that seek accreditation for a teacher preparation program. In addition, MSDE must pay (1) any fee that an accrediting agency charges an institution of higher education in connection with the accreditation process; (2) any training fee that a national accrediting agency charges a State

representative who serves with a review team of an accrediting agency in conjunction with an accreditation visit to an institution of higher education in the State; and (3) one-half of the expenses incurred by an institution of higher education in connection with the accreditation visit of a review team of an accrediting agency. The Governor must provide sufficient funds in MSDE's annual budget for the additional costs incurred by MSDE under these provisions of law.

A private nonprofit institution of higher education operating under a charter granted by the Maryland General Assembly may operate without a certificate of approval from MHEC.

Background: As of September 2016, the U.S. Department of Education no longer recognizes an accrediting agency for teacher preparation programs. Thus, institutions of higher education in the State may no longer offer undergraduate or graduate programs that certify teachers since there is no accrediting agency that meets the requirements of current law.

The U.S. Department of Education is not expected to recognize an accrediting agency for teacher preparation programs for at least two years. Graduating from an undergraduate or graduate program that certifies a recipient to teach allows an individual to quickly obtain a teaching certificate in Maryland because those programs meet all certification requirements set by MSDE. Unless current law is changed to alter the accreditation requirements for programs that certify a recipient to be a teacher, graduates of these programs will have to go through a lengthier review process with MSDE, which will place additional burdens on the local school districts hiring those graduates to submit certification requests.

[According to MSDE, as of January 2017](#), the following 11 public institutions of higher education have teacher preparation programs: Bowie State University; Coppin State University; Frostburg State University; Morgan State University; Salisbury University; St. Mary's College of Maryland; Towson University; University of Maryland, College Park Campus; University of Maryland, Baltimore County; University of Maryland, Eastern Shore; and University of Maryland University College. In addition, the following 12 independent institutions of higher education have teacher preparation programs: Notre Dame of Maryland University; Goucher College; Hood College; Johns Hopkins University; Loyola University Maryland; Maryland Institute College of Art; McDaniel College; Mount St. Mary's University; Peabody Institution of the Johns Hopkins University; Stevenson University; Washington Adventist University; and Washington College.

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2018 budget includes \$2.9 million and 23 full-time regular positions for the Division of Certification and Accreditation within MSDE. The division licenses teachers, specialists, and administrators; approves teacher education programs offered by colleges and universities in Maryland; coordinates certification assessments of

teacher and principal candidates; and approves the educational programs of nonpublic schools.

State Expenditures: MSDE anticipates increased responsibility associated with State approval of institutions of higher education that do not seek national accreditation; however, MSDE can absorb any associated costs with the approval process.

MSDE advises it has identified a more efficient alternative method for completing State approval of these programs. Specifically, under the direction of the State Superintendent, MSDE is initiating a “regionalized” approach to more effectively and efficiently approve teacher preparation programs in Maryland by working across MSDE divisions and with staff from MHEC and higher education institutions. MSDE believes this approach will also strengthen the link between higher education and the preK-12 communities, resulting in better prepared teachers.

Absent the bill, MSDE will need to begin individually evaluating and approving individuals who graduated from a teacher preparation program in Maryland due to there being no national teacher accreditation entity that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as of September 2016. Maryland law currently requires most teacher preparation programs in Maryland to be accredited by a national accrediting agency.

MHEC advises it can handle the additional responsibilities outlined in the bill using existing resources.

Local Expenditures: Absent the bill, local school systems may face delays in hiring due to the need to submit individual certification requests to MSDE for individuals who attended teacher preparation programs in Maryland. The additional requests may delay requests for other teachers as well.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; U.S. Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 6, 2017
mm/rhh Third Reader - March 28, 2017
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 28, 2017

Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510

ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Higher Education Institutions -Teacher Preparations Programs for Teacher Certification – Accreditation and Approval

BILL NUMBER: HB 715

PREPARED BY: Amanda Conn

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS