

SB0664/994834/1

BY: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 664

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**High School Graduation Requirements – Applications for**”; in line 3, after “**Aid**” insert “– Outreach Plan and Advisory Committee”; strike beginning with “requiring” in line 4 down through “guidelines;” in line 11 and substitute “requiring each county board of education to encourage and assist certain high school students to complete and submit certain financial aid forms by a certain deadline; requiring each county board to develop a certain outreach plan; providing for the contents of a certain outreach plan; requiring each county board to send a copy of a certain outreach plan to the State Department of Education, a certain advisory committee, and certain committees of the General Assembly; requiring the Department, in coordination with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, to establish a certain advisory committee for a certain purpose; providing for the composition and duties of the advisory committee; requiring the advisory committee to submit a certain report to the Governor and General Assembly on or before a certain date each year beginning in a certain year and publicly post the report on certain websites;”; in line 12, after the second “to” insert “the Department, a certain advisory committee, and”; in line 13, after “years;” insert “defining certain terms;”; in line 14, strike “graduation requirements for” and substitute “student financial aid planning for”; strike in their entirety lines 15 through 19, inclusive; in line 22, strike “7–205.1(h)” and substitute “7–211”; and after line 24, insert:

“Preamble

WHEREAS, The State recognizes that completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is one of the best predictors of whether a high school senior will go to college; and

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WHEREAS, The State recognizes that high school seniors who complete the FAFSA are 84% more likely to immediately enroll in postsecondary education and FAFSA completion is associated with a 172% increase in immediate college enrollment; and

WHEREAS, The State recognizes that, during the 2019–2020 FAFSA cycle, approximately only 64% of Maryland’s graduating seniors completed the FAFSA and that rate varies dramatically by county; and

WHEREAS, In one Maryland county, only 25–39% of seniors completed the FAFSA; and

WHEREAS, Congress recently passed historic legislation expanding the eligibility for financial aid and dramatically simplifying the FAFSA by reducing the number of questions from 108 to 36, simplifying the calculation process, and declaring that all families making less than 175% of the federal poverty level will receive a maximum Pell grant award; and

WHEREAS, With the historic federal changes and the increased financial need due to COVID–19, now is the time to call for action to help Maryland’s students afford college; now, therefore.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On pages 2 and 3, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 1 on page 2 through line 11 on page 3, inclusive.

On page 3, after line 11, insert:

“7–211.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “FAFSA” MEANS THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID.

(3) “MSFAA” MEANS THE MARYLAND STATE FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION.

(B) (1) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST AS MANY HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AS POSSIBLE IN COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING A FAFSA OR MSFAA BY THE DEADLINE FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID SET BY THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.

(2) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL DEVELOP AN OUTREACH PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

(3) EACH OUTREACH PLAN SHALL INCLUDE:

(i) COMPLETION OF A DATA SHARING AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMISSION TO RECEIVE FAFSA FILING STATUS INFORMATION UNDER THE FEDERAL FAFSA COMPLETION INITIATIVE;

(ii) PARTICIPATION IN THE MARYLAND COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMPAIGN;

(iii) AT LEAST THREE EVENING OR WEEKEND FINANCIAL AID NIGHTS THAT PROVIDE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS IN COMPLETING THE FAFSA OR MSFAA;

(iv) A DESCRIPTION OF PARTNERSHIPS, IF ANY, WITH:

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1. A COMMUNITY COLLEGE OR 4-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICING THAT JURISDICTION; OR

2. NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH ACCESSING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR COLLEGE ACCESS ORGANIZATIONS;

(V) A DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY'S STUDENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ABOUT THE FAFSA AND MSFAA AND THE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL AID PLANNING PROCESS, INCLUDING WHEN DURING THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS STUDENTS WILL BEGIN RECEIVING INFORMATION; AND

(VI) PLANS TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM THE FOLLOWING POPULATIONS INTENTIONALLY RECEIVE THE NECESSARY INFORMATION, ASSISTANCE, AND SUPPORT:

1. TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED STUDENTS, INCLUDING LOW-INCOME, MINORITY, AND NONNATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS;

2. UNACCOMPANIED AND HOMELESS YOUTH; AND

3. FOSTER CHILDREN.

(4) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2022 AND EACH OCTOBER 1 THEREAFTER, EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL SEND A COPY OF THEIR OUTREACH PLAN REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION TO THE DEPARTMENT, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, AND THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

(C) (1) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1 EACH YEAR, BEGINNING IN 2023 AND ENDING IN 2028, EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, AND THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE ON:

(I) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED THE FAFSA OR MSFAA IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING SCHOOL YEAR;

(II) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO DID NOT COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE FAFSA OR MSFAA IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING SCHOOL YEAR; AND

(III) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE FAFSA OR MSFAA BY THE DEADLINE FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID.

(2) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL REPORT THE DATA REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, DISAGGREGATED BY HIGH SCHOOL.

(D) (1) THE DEPARTMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION, SHALL ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO COUNTY BOARDS AND HIGH SCHOOLS WITH INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND BEST PRACTICES ON UNIVERSAL FAFSA OR MSFAA COMPLETION AND PLANNING FOR FINANCIAL AID FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OF ALL MARYLAND STUDENTS.

(2) THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL BE COMPOSED OF MEMBERS WHO ARE:

(I) SCHOOL COUNSELORS;

(II) SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL;

(III) COLLEGE OR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS;

(IV) RELEVANT COMMUNITY-BASED COLLEGE ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS; AND

(V) FINANCIAL AID, ENROLLMENT, OR OTHER RELEVANT OFFICIALS FROM COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND 4-YEAR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE STATE.

(3) THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL:

(I) 1. ANALYZE THE DATA FROM THE COUNTY BOARDS;
AND

2. DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES TO ASSIST WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVE SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (B)(1) OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING DATA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTY BOARDS;

(II) IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES, RELEVANT MATERIALS, TOOLKITS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES THAT WILL ASSIST COUNTY BOARDS IN

ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING FAFSA AND MSFAA COMPLETION RATES; AND

(III) ASSESS AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS ON:

1. THE ADEQUACY OF CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING AS COMPARED TO THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN THE STATE;

2. THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION'S FAFSA AND MSFAA PROCESSING AND DATA SHARING PRACTICES; AND

3. THE ADEQUACY OF SUPPORTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN THE EFFORT TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE.

(4) THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL MEET AT LEAST TWICE ANNUALLY TO:

(I) ANALYZE DATA;

(II) REVIEW THE OUTREACH PLANS SUBMITTED BY THE COUNTY BOARDS;

(III) DISCUSS THE FAFSA AND MSFAA SUBMISSION PROCESS; AND

(IV) MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AND THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.

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(5) THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL:

(I) SUBMIT A REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1, 2022 AND EACH AUGUST 1 THEREAFTER TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND

(II) PUBLICLY POST THE REPORT ON THE WEBSITES OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.”;

and in line 12, strike “3.” and substitute “2.”.