



High school counselors across Maryland currently work with students and parents to help them complete the FAFSA through parent nights and evening sessions with parents and students. In most local school systems, school counselors invite representatives from higher education to present these workshops since they are experts in financial aid. School counselors share information on free FAFSA sessions with all students and advertise FAFSA deadlines and media sites.

Furthermore, there is an existing program—the Maryland College Application Campaign (MCAC), which is a partnership between the MSDE, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and College Goal Maryland—that has sought to increase the number of Maryland students completing college applications. Since 2014, the MCAC supported 31,000 seniors in 166 high schools across the State to complete their college applications. In addition, some families have received support with the FAFSA process. The MCAC provides materials and support to schools and local school systems, notably the Maryland College Application Campaign Site Coordinator Guidebook.

Finally, the MSDE estimates that SB 762 may have a significant operational and fiscal impact on local school systems. Principals would be responsible for certifying that graduating students have met all requirements. Supporting students in meeting a new requirement and recording waivers in cases when that is permitted will require additional staff resources. In 2019, there were 59,228 students in grade 12 in Maryland public schools. An extra graduation requirement for students would increase the workload for school counselors and/or other school staff tasked with implementing SB 762, potentially requiring local school systems to hire additional personnel dedicated to helping students and families meet the requirements or document waivers. Larger school systems may also determine that a coordinator in the central office is needed to support school level services. Additional costs could include outreach services to help parents and guardians with understanding of the financial aid process and completion of the FAFSA. All services and materials will need to be bi-lingual.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 762**. For further information, please contact Tiffany Johnson Clark at 410-260-6028 or [tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov](mailto:tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov).