



**February 17, 2020**

**SB 1000 & HB 1300**

**Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation (Policy Area One - Prekindergarten)**

**House Ways & Means Committee / House Appropriations Committee  
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee / Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee**

**Position: SUPPORT w/ Amendments**

Our coalition is comprised of 7 associations and organizations that together represent 10,000 entities that currently provide quality early childhood education to approximately 150,000 Maryland children.

This coalition supports the Blueprint for Maryland's Future as a means to achieving a world-class education system for all Maryland students. Specifically, community-based private providers are excited to partner with the state on expansion of prekindergarten to Maryland three and four-year-olds. We offer below the general provisions that we believe are necessary to serve those students through the proposed mixed-delivery partnership.

Please find attached our suggested amendments.

**The Coalition supports:**

1. A goal of at least 50% of slots utilizing community-based providers.
2. Establish a sliding scale payment system to be in effect by FY 2023.
3. Authority, oversight, and a funding model wherein the money flows to all public and eligible private expansion sites from MSDE.
4. Alternative pathways to teacher certification must be created for those currently working in community-based programs and community-based settings should be allowed to hire teachers that hold a bachelor's degree and pursue certification, as allowed in public schools.
5. Pre-K Expansion sites to be eligible to participate at EXCELS Level 3 and be allotted 5 years to get to an EXCELS level 5.

## **Amendments to Senate Bill 1000 & House Bill 1300**

### **AMENDMENT No. 1**

On page 128, line 17, after “(A)” insert:

“(1) SUBJECT TO THE REQUIRMENTS OF PARAGRAPH (2) AND (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION,”;

Explanation: Amendments 1 through 3 refer to the prioritization of school construction for prekindergarten schools. Under the amendments, a county would have the burden of showing there are no available prekindergarten slots in private provider programs. The amendments require justification by a county for state approval of a project.

### **AMENDMENT No. 2**

On page 128, line 18, insert:

“(2) A COUNTY MAKING A REQUEST UNDER SUBSECTION (A) SHALL HAVE THE BURDEN OF DEMONSTRATING THE LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS.”

(3) IN PRIORITIZING PUBLIC SCHOOL CONTRUCTION REQUESTS, THE STATE SHALL CONSIDER WHETHER:

(I) A WAIVER UNDER 7-1A-03 OF THIS SUBTITLE HAS BEEN REQUESTED BY THE COUNTY; AND

(II) THE COUNTY HAS MET THE BURDEN OF DEMONSTRATING THE LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PROGRAMS IN THAT COUNTY FOR A CHILD TO ATTEND A PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 1.

### **AMENDMENT No. 3**

On page 128, line 19, after “(B)”, insert:

“AFTER DEMONSTRATING TO THE DEPARTMENT A LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS,”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 1.

### **AMENDMENT No. 4**

On page 42, on line 20, after “(B)”, insert (1); and on the same page, after “ARTICLE”, insert “AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AFTER JULY 1, 2020.”

“(2) A COUNTY MAY NOT IMPOSE ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.”

Explanation: Amendment 4 prohibits a county from imposing eligibility requirements for private providers to qualify for prekindergarten education.

**AMENDMENT No. 5:**

On page 43, line 1, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: Amendments 5 through 11 transfers the flow of money from county boards of education to MSDE. In the legislation, the State share and local share flows from the State and the counties to the county boards and the county boards then distribute the funding amount to each publicly funded prekindergarten provider. The Child Care Scholarship and Pre-k Expansion Grant program is currently administered by MSDE. MSDE has the systems and expertise in place to administer the distribution of the local and state share.

**AMENDMENT No. 6:**

On page 43, line 3, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 7:**

On page 43, line 4, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 8:**

On page 43, line 19, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 9:**

On page 43, line 20, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 10:**

On page 43, line 23, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 11:**

On page 43, line 24, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 5.

**AMENDMENT No. 12:**

On page 43, line 24, strike: “2026” and insert: “2023”

Explanation: This amendment moves up the implementation of the sliding scale from FY 2026 to FY 2023. This amendment will allow for more Tier II children to be access quality prekindergarten providers if the funds are available.

**AMENDMENT No. 13:**

On page 43, line 28, strike: “2026” and insert: “2023”

Explanation: See explanation to Amendment No. 12.

**AMENDMENT No. 14:**

On page 123, strike in its entirety lines 10 – 33 and on page 124, strike in its entirety lines 1-5 and insert:

“(A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ACHIEVE AN EQUITABLE MIXED DELIVERY OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PUBLIC PROVIDERS AND ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS:

- (1) BY SETTING A GOAL OF AT LEAST 30% OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2021; AND,
- (2) BY SETTING A GOAL OF AT LEAST 50% OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND FOR ALL FISCAL YEARS THEREAFTER.”

Explanation: The waiver language is unclear and propose an amendment to state that it is a goal to provide an expansion of at least 30% of new prekindergarten slots to eligible private providers in the first year, moving to 50% in 2025 consistent with the recommendations of the Commission. It is clear from conversations with three of the largest school districts in the state that they have neither the space nor the staff to expand seats at the rate suggested by the Blueprint.

**AMENDMENT No. 15:**

On page 124, on line 15, strike beginning with “~~RESIDENCY THROUGH THE MARYLAND APPROVED ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM~~” and substitute “CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE MARYLAND APPROVED ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM OR CERTIFICATION APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT.”

Explanation: The language defining residency is unclear and as this may become law, this amendment defers the alternative pathway to teacher certification should be pathway approved by The Department.

**AMENDMENT No. 16:**

On page 124, line 18, before “TEACHING ASSISTANTS”, insert: “BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2026,”

Explanation: This amendment is necessary as there is already a critical workforce shortage in child care programs and should this language be adopted in year 2021, the shortage will escalate leaving child care programs bereft of qualified teachers consequently impacting children's safety and working parents access to child care because providers cannot stay open without qualified staff. Many of the teachers working in childcare programs hold CDA's and AA degrees and if private providers are not at a 50% mixed delivery level in year one, we will lose qualified teachers to higher paying positions as teaching assistants in public schools. Changing the requirements to year 5 phase in will help maintain and build capacity for both public and private prekindergarten as those with high school diplomas working as assistant teachers will have more time to meet the new requirements.

**AMENDMENT No. 17:**

On page 126, line 14, before "EXPLICITLY", insert: "NON-INCIDENTAL,"

**AMENDMENT No. 18:**

On page 126, line 17, strike: "~~AND LOCATION~~"

**AMENDMENT No. 19**

On page 118, line 18, after "State", insert: "OR A TEACHER WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE PURSUING MARYLAND ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM OR STATE CERTIFICATION APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT"

**AMENDMENT No. 20**

On page 118, line 16, strike "~~average~~" and substitute "MAXIMUM"