



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

BILL: Senate Bill 1000 and House Bill 1300 **DATE:** February 17, 2020
SUBJECT: Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Implementation **COMMITTEES:** EHE, W&M, B&T, APP
POSITION: Information Only
CONTACT: Tiffany Clark
410-767-0090 (Baltimore)
tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov

EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for your consideration regarding Senate Bill (SB) 1000 and House Bill (HB) 1300, Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Implementation. We would like to acknowledge the important work and recommendations of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education reflected in SB1000/HB1300. This legislation creates a significant number of new or additional requirements that will magnify the responsibilities of the MSDE. The volume and degree of work will require a substantial investment in personnel to ensure that the requirements of the legislation are implemented with fidelity and efficiency.

The MSDE has sought to provide information below on many areas within SB 1000 and HB 1300 that may be instructive as the committees contemplates the legislation.

Early Childhood and Family Supports

We are encouraged by the additional investment in funding for early childhood educational opportunities and support for families outlined in SB1000/HB1300. A lack of resources and access to necessary supports often disproportionately impacts our most disadvantaged students. MSDE is committed to ensuring that our youngest learners and their families have equitable access to child care services and experiences that offer them pathways to success. MSDE will require a considerable number of additional personnel and resources to continue to develop a mixed-delivery system for publicly-funded prekindergarten, manage existing and new grant programs identified or expanded in the legislation, and provide technical support to child care providers and local school systems throughout the State.

Accountability and Implementation Board

MSDE has worked hard towards comprehensive accountability in recent years, and we are committed to effective measures of accountability and transparency for all stakeholders involved in the

implementation of SB 1000/HB 1300. The current accountability body for MSDE is the State Board of Education (State Board). SB 1000/HB 1300 establishes an *additional* Accountability and Implementation Board to monitor the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future over the course of 10 years. A number of the key measures identified with the establishment of the new Accountability and Implementation Board, are duplicative of the authority already vested in the State Board. Without clarity on which body serves as the ultimate accountability mechanism for MSDE, there will be significant confusion among stakeholders across Maryland as to where ultimate authority lies for setting education policy in the State. At this critical time for implementation of substantial programs, consistency and clarity are needed for all parties to move forward effectively with the Blueprint. Furthermore, the existing structures of State government are the best mechanisms to provide the necessary governance and accountability sought by all stakeholders involved. Under the oversight of the State Board, the Maryland Department of Education (MSDE) has the structure, expertise, and experience in place to carry out the responsibilities and charges outlined in this legislation.

School Leadership Training Programs

SB 1000/HB 1300 requires the MSDE to establish school leadership training programs, in collaboration with the Accountability and Implementation Board, to be provided to state-level leadership and instructional staff, as well as State and county board of education members, local superintendents, and school principals. The bill specifies that MSDE must “establish” these programs, however, what occurs after the development of specific content areas for appropriate audiences remains unclear.

The requirements of the leadership training program partnered with the additional requirements of the Accountability and Implementation Board are arduous and would prevent talented professionals and board members from accepting positions in which their skills are greatly needed.

College and Career Readiness – Graduation and High School Diploma

Currently, Maryland has one high school diploma for all of its students – the requirements of which are established by the State Board. The identification of a pathway to graduation through the newly established Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee that will be placed under the Governor’s Workforce Development Board may necessitate the development of a bifurcated system for the awarding of a high school diploma. Maryland’s one diploma has long been supported by *all* stakeholders as the best way to ensure *all* students have the access and opportunity for an equitable education.

Additionally, the post-College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standard pathway for CTE students as identified in the legislation may de-emphasize the academic rigor from CTE and could perpetuate inequitable learning environments for our students. In its present state, CTE programs of study provide the opportunity for students to earn college credit and associated degrees. Through intensive efforts, we have worked to intentionally dismantle the reputation that CTE programs involve a less rigorous graduation pathway.

In a 2019 study released by Georgetown University, it was demonstrated that those who obtain a bachelor’s degree or higher obtain quality jobs. This was particularly true for students of color. Creating

pathways that separate CTE from college preparatory program could further inequities. Career exploration and college preparation should not be developed in an either or fashion to ensure that all of Maryland’s students are prepared for the future.

Lastly, SB 1000/HB 1300 prevents students who are not deemed “gifted and talented” from enrolling in career and technical education pathways until the 11th grade. Allowing certain students to enroll in CTE pathways earlier than others will limit the number the number of CTE pathways available which again, will lead to inequitable learning environments for our students.

Development of Statewide Curriculum

SB 1000/HB 1300 requires the development of curriculum standards and resources for each subject area at every grade level. MSDE does not currently have the capacity to develop a statewide series of curricula, and would need a significant investment in personnel and resources to meet this responsibility. MSDE will have to establish an educator workgroup to develop the curriculum standards, provide training and professional development opportunities to local school systems and educators in individual schools. The schools that are required to adopt the standards as a result of a determination made by expert review teams, and integrate appropriate instructional scaffolds to support the needs of all learners will need additional supports from MSDE which are currently not available.

Juvenile Services Education Program

Juvenile Services Education System teachers are State employees paid through an Institutional Education Pay Plan (IEPP). While the MSDE supports raising teacher salaries to attract new teachers to the profession and incentivize existing teachers to stay in the profession, the increase in county teacher salaries proposed in SB 1000/HB 1300, absent a corresponding increase in the IEPP, is inequitable.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit the information provided here, and respectfully request that the appropriate committees consider this information as you deliberate **SB 1000 and HB 1300**. For further information, please contact Tiffany Clark, at 410-767-0090, or tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov.