



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: SB 893
TITLE: Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023
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POSITION: Support
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports** Senate Bill 893.

This omnibus bill addresses many challenges in the recruitment and retention of Maryland public school teachers. Highlights include loosening restrictions on alternative early childhood education and the creation of a Maryland Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity Dashboard. Additional provisions reflect the Legislature's intent for Maryland to join the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact to ease certification for teachers coming to Maryland from other states with high-quality certification processes. The Teaching Fellows for Maryland program shifts to the MSDE from the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and the legislation alters some qualifications for applicants and recipients of the Teaching Fellows. Additionally, the Grow Our Own Educators Scholarship Program is codified to provide scholarships to individuals who pledge to fulfill a certain service obligation as a full-time teacher in the State, and a new Educator Internship Stipend Program is established to provide stipends to student teachers in internships working directly with students.

Teacher shortage is a significant problem in Maryland, one we share with school districts across the nation. As we know, teacher support and teacher quality directly impact educational achievement for students. Systems and schools plagued by the lack of qualified teachers, teacher turnover, and lack of diversity in the workforce all negatively impact student learning. According to a State Board of Education presentation in July of 2022,

“Research indicates that the cost of separation, recruitment, hiring, and training has been estimated to cost between \$9,000 and \$21,000 per teacher. While teacher vacancies

continue to increase, total enrollment in Maryland's Educator Preparation programs has declined by 33%.”

This pipeline shortage is critically important and portends that our shortage will continue in the near-term.

Teacher diversity is also a challenge in Maryland. The teaching workforce has remained predominantly white, while the student demographics have grown much more diverse. From the above referenced MSDE presentation,

“Over the past 10 years, less than 30% of Maryland teachers were teachers of color. Studies show that increased diversity amongst teachers and broader sets of school professionals benefit student test-score performance and leads to improved school behaviors.”

An important research outcome is the fact that alternative preparation programs are more diverse than traditional colleges of education. This legislation is well positioned to help bring more alternative preparation programs to the State.

This legislation will complement and supplement the tenets of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint includes the creation of career ladders based on merit, as well as salary incentives for highly trained teachers, and incentives for teaching in low-performing schools. One commonly held notion is that the best teacher “attraction,” is a strong “retention” effort. Sadly, Maryland's retention statistics are bruising in that almost half of new teachers with five year or less tenure, resign voluntarily.

We thank the Moore Administration and legislative leaders who have contributed to and promoted these innovative and research-based solutions to the teacher shortage crisis in Maryland. For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 893 and urges a favorable report.