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**TO:** Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

**BILL:** Senate Bill (SB) 377 – Higher Education – Teacher Development and Retention Program – Definition

**DATE:** February 14, 2024

**POSITION:** Support

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**Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,**

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) would like to express our support for **SB 377**, which would add community colleges to the list of eligible institutions as part of the criteria for the Teacher Development and Recruitment Program.

This bill would enhance the Teacher Development and Retention Program by making community college students who are interested in pursuing a career in the teaching profession eligible to participate in the Program. We support the recent efforts of the Administration and the General Assembly to bolster the development of a pipeline of diverse educators.

Maryland continues to experience a shortage of teachers across local education agencies and subject areas. Maryland educator preparation programs have not historically produced the number of teachers needed to fill Maryland vacancies. For this reason, the State Board, Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, and MSDE have worked deliberately through the regulatory process to build flexible pathways aimed at recruiting a diverse educator workforce, as well as through supporting grow-your-own programs to address existing shortages, increase diversity, and develop educators right here in Maryland.

This legislation adds another tool to help achieve this goal. Maryland community colleges educate a significant and diverse portion of the postsecondary student population and are a critical partner in expanding the educator pipeline.

The State Board and MSDE request a favorable committee report on **SB 377**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at [Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov) or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at [Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov) or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.