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**TO:** House Appropriations Committee

**BILL:** House Bill (HB) 490 – Education - The Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions

**DATE:** February 24, 2026

**POSITION:** Support with Amendments

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The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) extend this letter of support for *HB 490 – Education - The Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions*, which makes a number of adjustments to the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to better support students, educators, and school and district staff.

The legislation reflects several shared priorities between the State Board and the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB), including reducing unnecessary reporting requirements for educators and administrators; streamlining State oversight of Career and Technical Education (CTE); expanding the ways teacher candidates may demonstrate essential pedagogical knowledge; allowing funds for high-poverty schools to be used for academic purposes; delaying implementation of the requirement that new principals obtain National Board Certification prior to licensure; and ensuring that resources are appropriately allocated to the State’s highest-need schools.

These modifications to various parts of the Blueprint will allow schools and school districts to focus their efforts and resources on the work that will have the greatest impact on student academic achievement.

The State Board and MSDE value their strong collaborative relationship with the AIB in developing these legislative recommendations and advancing shared policy priorities that support Maryland’s students and the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. In collaboration with the AIB, MSDE has developed several friendly amendments to refine the bill’s language, promote consistency, and support effective and practical implementation. AIB has agreed to the following clarifications in the proposed bill:

1. 6-126(a)(3)(I): An individual who graduates from a Maryland teacher preparation program may not be required to take a portfolio-based assessment more than one time if they take the program-developed assessment or the nationally-recognized assessment. The current language is limited to those who take the nationally-recognized assessment. Striking the term “nationally-recognized” is recommended and adding a clarification to now read: “An individual who graduates from a teacher preparation program in the State who passed a ~~nationally-recognized~~, portfolio-based assessment DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2)(ii) OF THIS SUBSECTION may not be required to take the assessment more than one time”.
2. 6-126(a)(3)(II): An individual who completes a Department-sponsored registered teaching apprenticeship program may submit the apprenticeship certificate in lieu of meeting the requirements in (a)(2)(ii). The current language allows the substitution of the apprenticeship certificate only for passing a nationally recognized portfolio-based assessment. It is recommended that the citation be amended to reflect (2)(II) rather than (2)(II)1A.

3. 6-126(b)(4): The current language requires the evaluation of performance from a “school system.” This will preclude experienced out-of-state teachers who have served in a private school from being able to demonstrate teaching experience in place of taking a test of teaching ability. It is recommended that the language be expanded to “school or school system.”

We look forward to partnering with the AIB to ensure effective implementation and sustained progress for students across the State.

The State Board and MSDE respectfully request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates on **HB 490**. Please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at [laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov](mailto:laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov), if you would like any additional information.