

# SENATE BILL 771

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By: **Senator M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 1, 2024

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Initial Teacher Certification – Requirements**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing a provision of law that requires a teacher preparation  
4 program to require a student to pass a certain assessment as a graduation  
5 requirement; altering the requirements for initial teacher certification; repealing  
6 certain certification requirements to pass a certain literacy test, a certain skills  
7 assessment, and a certain reading mastery test; requiring, rather than authorizing,  
8 the State Superintendent of Schools to pursue and make certain reciprocal educator  
9 credentialing agreements with other states; and generally relating to initial teacher  
10 certification.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
12 Article – Education  
13 Section 6–121(a), 6–125, 6–126, and 6–705  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Education**

19 6–121.

20 (a) A teacher preparation program shall:

21 (1) Include the following components of instruction:

22 (i) Basic research skills and methods and training on the routine  
23 evaluation and use of research and data to improve student performance;

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) Differentiation of instruction and demonstration of cultural  
2 competence for students of diverse racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic backgrounds with  
3 different learning abilities;

4 (iii) Implementation of restorative approaches for student behaviors;

5 (iv) Identifying and assessing, in the context of the classroom, typical  
6 student learning deficits and techniques to remedy learning deficits;

7 (v) Recognizing and effectively using high quality instructional  
8 materials, including digital resources and computer technology;

9 (vi) Core academic subjects that teachers will be teaching;

10 (vii) Methods and techniques for identifying and addressing the social  
11 and emotional needs of students, including trauma-informed approaches to pedagogy;

12 (viii) Skills and techniques for effective classroom management; and

13 (ix) Training in the skills and techniques for teaching effectively in a  
14 virtual learning environment, including the use of online curriculum;

15 (2) Require program participants to demonstrate competency in each of the  
16 components required under paragraph (1) of this subsection; **AND**

17 (3) Provide training in the knowledge and skills required to understand  
18 and teach the Maryland curriculum frameworks]; and

19 (4) On or after July 1, 2025, require passing a nationally recognized,  
20 portfolio-based assessment of teaching ability as a requirement for graduation].

21 6–125.

22 (a) (1) The Department shall determine whether the Basic Literacy Skills test  
23 [required] **APPROVED** for initial teacher certification is at least as rigorous as the similar  
24 examination administered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

25 (2) If the Department determines the Basic Literacy Skills test is  
26 insufficient under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Department shall develop a new  
27 literacy examination of sufficient rigor.

28 (3) The Department may not limit the number of times an individual may  
29 take the literacy examination developed under this subsection in order to pass.

30 (b) (1) (i) Beginning after the implementation of the literacy examination  
31 under subsection (a) of this section, the Department shall develop and administer

1 challenging, subject-specific examinations tailored to the subjects and grade level at which  
2 teachers will teach.

3 (ii) Subject-specific examinations shall be at least as rigorous as  
4 similar examinations administered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

5 (iii) The Department may not limit the number of times an individual  
6 may take a subject-specific examination to pass the examination.

7 (2) Before a subject-specific examination developed under paragraph (1) of  
8 this subsection is administered, the Department shall develop standards for the  
9 subject-specific examination and submit the standards to each Department-approved  
10 teacher preparation program 1 year before the first year in which the examination is  
11 expected to be administered.

12 (3) A teacher preparation program with standards for a subject-specific  
13 examination developed by the Department under paragraph (2) of this subsection shall  
14 incorporate the standards into the curriculum of the teacher preparation program in a  
15 timely manner.

16 6-126.

17 (a) (1) This subsection applies to individuals who have graduated from a  
18 teacher preparation program [approved by the Department] or an alternative teacher  
19 preparation program.

20 (2) Beginning on July 1, 2025, to qualify for an initial certificate an  
21 individual shall:

22 (i) **PASS THE SUBJECT-SPECIFIC EXAMINATIONS UNDER §**  
23 **6-125 OF THIS SUBTITLE;**

24 (ii) **MEET ONE OF THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:**

25 1. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, pass a  
26 nationally recognized, portfolio-based assessment of teaching ability;

27 2. **PASS A BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT;**

28 3. **HOLD A DEGREE FROM A REGIONALLY ACCREDITED**  
29 **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND HAVE EARNED A MINIMUM OVERALL CUMULATIVE**  
30 **GRADE POINT AVERAGE OF 3.0 ON A 4.0 SCALE OR ITS EQUIVALENT ON THE MOST**  
31 **RECENTLY EARNED DEGREE; OR**

32 4. **SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION SATISFACTORY TO THE**  
33 **DEPARTMENT OF SATISFACTORY EVALUATIONS FROM A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM**

1 FROM COMPLETION OF A RIGOROUS TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM FOR THE  
2 LESSER OF:

3 A. 3 YEARS; OR

4 B. THE AMOUNT OF TIME A TEACHER MAY HOLD A  
5 CONDITIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATE; AND

6 [(ii) Pass a rigorous State-specific examination of mastery of reading  
7 instruction and content for the grade level the individual will be teaching; and]

8 (iii) Satisfactorily complete any other requirements established by  
9 the State Board.

10 (3) An individual who graduates from a teacher preparation program in  
11 the State who passed a nationally recognized, portfolio-based assessment [as a  
12 requirement to graduate under § 6-121 of this subtitle] may not be required to take the  
13 assessment more than one time.

14 (b) In addition to any other requirements established by the State Board, to  
15 qualify for a certificate in the State, a teacher who [graduated from an institution of higher  
16 education in another state or] holds a professional license or certificate from another state  
17 shall:

18 (1) [Pass an examination of teaching ability within 18 months of being  
19 hired by a local school system] **MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN INITIAL TEACHER  
20 CERTIFICATE UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION;** or

21 (2) Hold an active National Board Certification from the National Board  
22 for Professional Teaching Standards.

23 (c) (1) The Department, after a reasonable period of review and assessment,  
24 shall determine whether one of the assessments of teaching skill [required] **APPROVED** for  
25 initial teacher certification under this section more adequately measures the skills and  
26 knowledge required of a highly qualified teacher.

27 (2) If the Department makes a determination under paragraph (1) of this  
28 subsection that requires a revision to the statutory requirements for initial teacher  
29 certification, the Department shall, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government  
30 Article, submit a report to the General Assembly on or before the next September 1 on its  
31 recommendations for revising the qualifications for initial teacher [licensure]  
32 **CERTIFICATION.**

33 (d) (1) The Department shall actively monitor and assess, during their  
34 implementation and development, new teacher standards and assessments produced under

1 this section for any negative impact on the diversity of teacher candidates passing the  
2 initial teacher certification assessments.

3 (2) The Department shall report the results of its monitoring and  
4 assessment to the Accountability and Implementation Board established under § 5–402 of  
5 this article.

6 6–705.

7 (a) **IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE PROCESS FOR**  
8 **INITIAL CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL**  
9 **EDUCATED OR CREDENTIALLED IN OTHER STATES BE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE TO**  
10 **ENCOURAGE MORE TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO LIVE AND WORK**  
11 **IN THE STATE.**

12 (b) Subject to the rules and regulations that are implemented according to §  
13 6–704 of this subtitle, the State Superintendent [may] **SHALL PURSUE AND** make an  
14 agreement with the appropriate educational authority of any other state **THAT HAS**  
15 **SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS OTHERWISE**  
16 **REQUIRED BY THIS TITLE** to provide for reciprocity in the certification of teachers.

17 [(b)] (c) Subject to the regulations of the Board, the State Superintendent may  
18 accept the accreditation for certification purposes of a program for teacher preparation if:

19 (1) The accreditation is granted by a recognized national accrediting  
20 agency; and

21 (2) The institution preparing the teachers is in another state.

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
23 1, 2024.