

Chapter 377

(Senate Bill 677)

AN ACT concerning

Education – Professional Development for Teachers and Providers of Early Childhood Education – Master Plan

FOR the purpose of requiring the State Department of Education, in collaboration with the Maryland Higher Education Commission and certain representatives from certain institutions of higher education, to develop a certain master plan that focuses on certain issues relating to qualified providers of early childhood education services; providing for the contents of a certain master plan; requiring the Department and the Commission to make certain recommendations; requiring the Department and the Commission to submit a certain plan and certain recommendation on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to professional development in the early childhood education workforce.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That:

(a) The State Department of Education, in collaboration with the Maryland Higher Education Commission and representatives from institutions of higher education in the State that offer early childhood education programs, shall develop a master plan to address the critical shortage of qualified professional teachers and child care providers in the early childhood education workforce.

(b) The master plan required under subsection (a) of this section shall focus on:

(1) Creating Early Childhood Education bachelor's degree programs at institutions of higher education in the State that focus on educating children both with and without disabilities from birth to age 8;

(2) Establishing a continuum of high-quality professional development options in early childhood education for current and prospective providers of early childhood education, including family child care providers, child care center-based providers, and Early Head Start and Head Start staff;

(3) Implementing a professional development system that utilizes a nationally recognized early childhood education certificate program that accepts prior learning experience; and

(4) Ensuring that regular, ongoing joint training of elementary school staff and early childhood education program staff who receive public prekindergarten funding is available.

(c) The Department and the Commission shall jointly make recommendations on methods of:

- (1) Attracting individuals to the field of early childhood education; and
- (2) Retaining current teachers and providers in the field of early childhood education.

(d) On or before December 31, 2015, the Department and the Commission shall jointly submit to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environment Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means:

- (1) The master plan required under subsection (a) of this section; and
- (2) The recommendations required under subsection (c) of this section.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2015. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2016, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2015.