

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 810 (Senator Ramirez)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Higher Education - Programs in Dental Hygiene and Medical Laboratory
Technology - Transfer of Students and Senatorial and Delegate Scholarships**

This bill requires the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to develop and implement a transfer agreement for students who earn an Associate of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene or Medical Laboratory Technology at an institution of higher education in the State such that at least 60 credits of the credits earned must be transferable to a public four-year higher education institution for credit toward a bachelor's degree. The bill also expands the institutions at which a senatorial or delegate scholarship may be used to include an institution of higher education that awards an Associate of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene or Medical Laboratory Technology that has received an MHEC certificate of approval, which includes out-of-state institutions that have triggered physical presence in the Maryland.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. MHEC, Maryland public four-year higher education institutions, and Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) are already required to develop and implement transfer agreements. Expanding *eligibility* for the senatorial and delegate scholarships does not require additional spending. Senators and delegates receive a set amount of scholarship money, which is not changed by the bill.

Local Effect: None. Local community colleges are already required to develop and implement transfer agreements with public four-year institutions.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Essentially, the bill requires MHEC to develop and implement a transfer agreement for students who earn an Associate of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene or Medical Laboratory Technology at a for-profit institution or at an out-of-state institution with a physical presence in the State such that at least 60 credits of the credits earned as part of the degree must be transferable to a public four-year higher education institution for credit toward a bachelor's degree.

Current Law:

MHEC is required to develop and implement transfer agreements with community colleges and public four-year institutions.

Student Transfer Advisory Committee

Chapter 327 of 2012 codified the Student Transfer Advisory Committee (STAC), which had been meeting since 1990. It was formed as a statewide advisory group to address issues related to transfer and articulation. STAC is charged with reviewing and analyzing (1) articulation and student support services, including admission and advising practices and (2) any other student transfer-related issues as referred to the committee by MHEC.

Transfer and Reverse Transfer Agreements

Chapter 533 of 2013, the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act, requires MHEC, in collaboration with the public institutions of higher education, to develop and implement the following:

- a statewide transfer agreement whereby at least 60 credits of general education, elective, and major courses that a student earns at any community college in the State toward an associate's of art or associate's of science degree must be transferable to any public four-year higher education institution in the State for credit toward a bachelor's degree by July 1, 2016; and
- a statewide reverse transfer agreement whereby at least 30 credits that a student earns at any public four-year higher education institution in the State toward a bachelor's degree are transferable to any community college in the State for credit toward an associate's degree by July 1, 2016.

Eligible Institutions for State Student Financial Assistance

Under Chapter 277 of 2011, until June 30, 2016, a scholarship, grant, loan, or other student financial assistance awarded by the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) within

MHEC may only be used at an in-state institution of higher education that possesses a certificate of approval from MHEC. With regards to State financial assistance, an in-state institution of higher education is defined as a degree-granting institution whose primary campus is located in Maryland and whose authority to grant degrees is conferred by Maryland.

The language regarding the institutions at which State financial aid may be used terminates June 30, 2016. Thereafter, except as otherwise specified, State student financial assistance awarded by OSFA may only be used at a public or private institution of higher education in this State that possesses a certificate of approval from MHEC. MHEC has interpreted this law to allow only students attending public institutions of higher education in the State and private institutions that have their headquarters or primary campus in Maryland to receive financial assistance, unless otherwise specified in the statute for the particular financial assistance program. There are exceptions for private career schools for the senatorial and delegate scholarships, as well as the private career school student grant program.

Senatorial Scholarships

Each senator may award \$138,000 in scholarship funds each year. A senator must award scholarships prior to September 1 of each year. Any funding that a senator has not awarded by the September 1 deadline is distributed by MHEC to eligible applicants from the senator's district. To qualify for an award, an individual must be a resident of Maryland and demonstrate a definite financial need. Each senator must consider an applicant's financial need. An award under the program may not be less than \$400 and may not exceed the tuition and mandatory fees at the University System of Maryland (USM) institution with the highest annual tuition and fees, not including the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). A scholarship may be held for up to four years of full-time study or eight years of part-time study. Except for specified off-campus housing and specified programs not available in Maryland (discussed further below), a senatorial scholarship may only be used at any undergraduate, graduate, or professional school in the State. A senatorial scholarship may be used at a degree-granting institution of higher education, if the curriculum is approved by MHEC, a hospital diploma school for training registered nurses, or to attend a private postsecondary proprietary institution that is accredited by a national accrediting association approved by the U.S Department of Education as a full-time student. Thus, due to the eligible institutions for State student financial assistance and current law regarding senatorial scholarships, after June 30, 2016, a senatorial scholarship may not be used at an out-of-state institution of higher education that has triggered physical presence in the State.

Each senator may award at most 10% of his or her scholarship funds to applicants planning to attend accredited undergraduate, graduate, or professional institutions outside of the State. Those students must be studying an academic area that is not available in the State or be a person with a hearing impairment who will be studying at an institution outside the State that makes special provisions for persons with a hearing impairment.

The scholarship may be used for educational expenses as defined by OSFA, including tuition and mandatory fees and room and board. If on-campus housing is available, a senatorial scholarship may not be used to pay for off-campus housing.

Delegate Scholarships

During a term in office, each delegate may award the equivalent of four four-year full-time scholarships or two part-time scholarships for each full-time scholarship available. A delegate may select scholarship recipients on any basis he or she considers appropriate. The annual amount of a scholarship for any one recipient may not exceed the tuition and mandatory fees at the USM institution with the highest annual tuition and fees, not including UMUC and UMB. A scholarship award may be used to pay tuition and mandatory fees at a Maryland institution of postsecondary education or, when the desired program of study or appropriate accommodations are not available in Maryland, an out-of-state institution. Instead of awarding the scholarships himself or herself, a delegate may authorize MHEC to award funding to eligible applicants under the Delegate Howard P. Rawlings Educational Excellence Awards program.

A delegate scholarship may be used at an in-state institution of higher education whose primary campus is located in Maryland and whose authority to grant degrees is conferred in Maryland for a program of undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies. If the applicant will be studying in an academic area that is not available in the State or under certain circumstances where the applicant is disabled, the scholarship may be used at an accredited undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies institution outside the State. The scholarship may also be used at a private career school within the State that is approved by MHEC and that is accredited by a national accrediting association that is approved by the U.S. Department of Education. After June 30, 2016, a delegate scholarship may not be used at an out-of-state institution that has triggered a physical presence in the State.

Background:

Dental Hygiene

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), dental hygienists clean teeth, examine patients for signs of oral diseases such as gingivitis, and provide other preventative dental care. They also educate patients on ways to improve and maintain good

oral health. Almost all dental hygienists work in dentists' offices. They work closely with dentists and dental assistants.

Dental hygienists typically need an associate's degree in dental hygiene. Bachelor's degrees in dental hygiene are also available, but they are less common. A bachelor's or master's degree is usually required for research, teaching, or clinical practice in public or school health programs. All states require dental hygienists to be licensed, although requirements vary by state.

In Maryland to qualify for a license to practice dental hygiene, the applicant must be a graduate of a school for dental education that (1) requires at least two years of education in an institution of higher education; (2) is accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation; and (3) is approved by the State Board of Dental Examiners. An applicant must also pass an examination given by the State Board of Dental Examiners.

Nationwide, in May 2012, the median annual wage for dental hygienists was \$70,210. The lowest 10% earned less than \$46,540, and the top 10% earned more than \$96,280.

Medical Technology

According to BLS, medical laboratory technologists and medical laboratory technicians collect samples and perform tests to analyze body fluids, tissue, and other substances; 50% work in hospitals.

Medical laboratory technologists typically need a bachelor's degree. Technicians usually need an associate's degree or a postsecondary certificate. Some states require technologists and technicians to be licensed; a license is not required in Maryland.

Medical laboratory technologists and technicians can obtain a general certification as a medical laboratory technologist or technician, respectively, or a certification in a specialty, such as cytotechnology or medical biology. Most credentialing institutions require that technologists complete an accredited education program in order to qualify to sit for an examination. Although certification is not required to enter the occupation in all cases, employers typically prefer to hire certified technologists and technicians.

Nationwide, in May 2012, the median annual wage for medical laboratory technologists was \$57,580. The lowest 10% earned less than \$39,580, and the highest 10% earned more than \$78,900.

The median annual wage for medical laboratory technicians was \$37,240 in May 2012. The lowest 10% earned less than \$24,790, and the highest 10% earned more than \$57,710.

Degree Programs in Maryland

According to MHEC's website the following five community colleges offer an Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene: Allegany College of Maryland; BCCC; Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC); Hagerstown Community College; and Howard Community College. UMB is listed as the only public four-year institution of higher education that offers a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene. At least one for-profit institution operating in the State, Fortis College, offers an Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene.

The following five community colleges offer an Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory Technology: Allegany College of Maryland; Anne Arundel Community College; College of Southern Maryland; CCBC; and Howard Community College. Salisbury University is listed as the only public four-year institution of higher education that offers a bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science. Washington Adventist University, a private nonprofit institution of higher education, also offers a bachelor's degree in medical technology. At least two for-profit institutions operating in the State, Fortis College and Independence University, offer an Associate of Science in Medical Technology or Associate of Occupational Studies in Medical Specialties (which is coded as the same degree).

Transfer Students in Maryland

Approximately 21,900 students transferred into USM institutions in fiscal 2013 (including summer 2012, fall 2012, and spring 2013 semesters) an increase of 500 transfers from fiscal 2012. Over half of the students who transferred to a USM institution came from a Maryland community college. There is limited accessible data on transfers from private nonprofit institutions, for-profit institutions, or out-of-state institutions.

For the non-Maryland community college transfers, the "other transfers" included students transferring from other Maryland four-year institutions as well as two-year and four-year out-of-state institutions. In total, the "other transfers" category is nearly 10,000 students, with over 8,000 of these transferring to USM from out-of-state institutions. The vast majority (72%) of the 10,000 "other transfers" enrolled at UMUC. Comparable data from Morgan State University and St. Mary's College of Maryland is not readily available.

Existing Transfer Programs

Maryland has three statewide transfer programs already established – an Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT), an Associate of Arts in Nursing (AAN), and an Associate of Science in Engineering (ASE). The AAT and ASE are designed to transfer as a degree rather than on a course-by-course basis into parallel four-year programs in Maryland. Completion of

an AAT or ASE at qualified institutions does not guarantee admission into a four-year program or institution.

In addition, the Nursing Academic Progressions Committee has continued its work, with representatives from the State's two-year and four-year nursing programs as well as hospitals, to look at strengthening and increasing the number of articulated pathways for Maryland students from an AAN registered nurse degree to a bachelor's of science in nursing to a master's of science in nursing and beyond.

The work to develop the transfer agreements required by the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013 is ongoing.

Articulation System for Maryland Colleges and Universities

The Articulation System for Maryland Colleges and Universities ([ARTSYS](#)) is a computerized data information system which informs students and advisors at a community college or four-year institution about the transferability of each community college and four-year course. It indicates whether the course is transferable and, if so, indicates the four-year institution's equivalent course number. It also indicates the general education areas, at both the sending and receiving institution, applicable to the course.

ARTSYS is developed and maintained by USM. The system is presently in use at all Maryland public institutions and some independent colleges and universities. However, there is no information on transferring from a for-profit institution of higher education or an out-of-state institution with a physical presence in Maryland.

Senatorial and Delegate Scholarships

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2016 budget includes \$6.5 million for senatorial scholarships (\$138,000 per senator) and \$5.9 million for delegate scholarships (\$41,888 per delegate).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Baltimore City Community College, Maryland Higher Education Commission, Department of Health and Mental

Hygiene, Morgan State University, University System of Maryland, Department of
Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 17, 2015
min/rhh

Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510