

Article - Education

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§6–123.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Collaborative” means a signed agreement outlining commitments of a partnership among at least one county board, one teacher preparation program, and one exclusive employee representative to improve teacher education to prepare teachers for higher teacher standards and integrate teacher induction, professional development, and advancement to meet the goals of the January 2019 Interim Report of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education established under Chapters 701 and 702 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2016.

(3) “Exclusive employee representative” means an employee organization designated as the exclusive representative of all public school employees in a county.

(4) “Program” means the Teacher Collaborative Grant Program.

(5) “Public school employee” has the meaning stated in § 6–401 of this title.

(6) “Teacher preparation program” means a program of undergraduate or graduate studies that:

(i) Prepares an individual to teach; and

(ii) Is offered at an institution of higher education in the State that is accredited or approved to operate under this article.

(b) (1) There is a Teacher Collaborative Grant Program.

(2) The purpose of the Program is to:

(i) Provide funds for collaboratives to develop state-of-the-art professional education for prospective and current teachers that reflects international and national best practices; and

(ii) Award grants to multiple collaboratives in various regions of the State that will develop model professional development programs that can be replicated in local school systems throughout the State.

(3) The Department shall administer the Program in consultation with the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

(c) (1) A county board or teacher preparation program may submit an application to the Department to receive a grant to form a teacher collaborative that is in furtherance of the purpose of the Program.

(2) To be eligible for a grant, an application shall identify a signed partnership agreement among at least one county board, one teacher preparation program, and one exclusive employee representative to form a teacher collaborative to design and implement at least two of the following:

(i) A 21st-century practicum for teacher candidates to gain teaching experience in the classroom;

(ii) A professional development program for existing teachers;
and

(iii) A peer assistance and review program to support:
1. Induction and mentoring programs for new teachers and struggling teachers; and

2. Effective teacher evaluation systems.

(3) A practicum design developed under the Program shall require:

(i) Prospective teachers to complete a full school year of practical teaching experience before completing a teacher preparation program that:

1. Shall be completed within the existing degree requirements to graduate from the teacher preparation program, if possible; and

2. May be completed at any time during the teacher preparation program as determined by the collaborative;

(ii) A county board and teacher preparation program jointly to identify a placement for a teacher candidate and compensate a mentor teacher to supervise and coach the teacher candidate;

(iii) Public schools offering the practicum to:

1. Be organized in a career ladder system; and
2. Consist of diverse student bodies that reflect the diversity of public schools in the State or the geographic area where the school is located;

(iv) Members of the public school faculty who are professor master teachers on the career ladder to hold appointments to teach as clinical or adjunct faculty at the teacher preparation program;

(v) Members of the public school faculty who are lead teachers or master teachers on the career ladder to be responsible for designing the public school's induction and mentoring program for new teachers and struggling teachers; and

(vi) Members of the public school faculty and the teacher preparation program faculty to be fully trained to understand and implement international and national best practices for teacher preparation and professional development.

(4) A professional development program developed under the Program shall provide training and education in one or more of the following:

(i) Culturally responsive pedagogy, content knowledge, and best practices in teaching diverse students and communicating with diverse student families, including individuals of all races, religions, sexual orientations, and gender identities;

(ii) Evaluation and effective use of research, data, and high-quality instructional materials, including digital resources and technology, to improve student performance;

(iii) Effective management of student behavior, including training in the use of restorative practices and trauma-informed approaches to meet student needs;

(iv) Conducting assessments of typical learning challenges for a student and methods to help the student overcome those challenges, including effective tools and strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities and implement individualized education programs and 504 plans; and

(v) Recognition of student mental health disorders.

(5) (i) A peer assistance and review program developed under the Program shall use:

1. Lead teachers or master teachers on the career ladder to mentor new teachers and support existing teachers who are struggling or low performing; and
2. An effective teacher evaluation system to provide rigorous, reliable, and relevant feedback for educators.

(ii) A teacher evaluation system developed under this paragraph shall:

1. Define the knowledge and skills expected of a teacher;
2. Utilize documented performance measures to provide personalized feedback that is aligned with the teacher's strengths, needs, and professional learning context; and
3. Use a peer observation-based process to evaluate a teacher that:
 - A. Can be linked to student learning outcomes;
 - B. Requires the competency of the evaluator to be assessed;
 - C. Requires stakeholders, teachers and teacher candidates, and evaluators to be fully trained to understand the evaluation process; and
 - D. Includes postobservation conferences between the teacher and evaluator to encourage reflection of the teacher's teaching practice.

(6) An application shall include:

- (i) A description of at least two of the proposed:
 1. Practicum design for teacher candidates;
 2. Professional development program for existing teachers; or

3. Peer assistance and review program;

(ii) Evidence that the teacher preparation program in the collaborative submitted a grant application to a national program, if applicable, to increase the quality and diversity of the teacher candidate population; and

(iii) Any other information required by the Department.

(d) (1) The Department shall establish processes and procedures for accepting and evaluating applications.

(2) Grants shall be awarded on a competitive basis.

(3) The Department shall make awards in a timely fashion.

(4) The Department shall ensure to the extent practicable geographic diversity among the grantees.

(5) A grant made under this section may be renewed by the Department after a 3-year period unless performance criteria indicate that the teacher collaborative has not made sufficient progress in implementing the programs specified in the application.

(e) (1) The Department shall conduct an evaluation at least once during each grant period of the practicum designs, professional development programs, and peer assistance and review programs in the Program to determine whether to recommend that one or multiple programs should be replicated throughout the State.

(2) The Department shall establish criteria for the evaluation, including the type and format of data to be collected by a teacher collaborative.

(f) (1) For each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021, the State shall distribute at least \$2,500,000 to the Department for the Teacher Collaborative Grant Program.

(2) The Department may retain up to 3% of the appropriation required under this subsection to hire staff necessary to administer the Program.

(g) On or before December 1, 2019, and on or before December 1 of 2020 and 2021, the Department shall report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on:

(1) The number of grant applications received under the Program;

(2) The number of grants awarded under the Program; and

(3) The current status of each grantee and the grantee's activities funded under the Program.

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