

# SENATE BILL 609

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By: **Senator M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2023

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Early Childhood Education Teachers – Qualifications**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the qualifications for early childhood education teacher  
4 certification completed through an alternative preparation program; and generally  
5 relating to qualifications for early childhood education teacher certification.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
7 Article – Education  
8 Section 6–120(a) and (b) and 7–1A–04(a)  
9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
10 (2022 Replacement Volume)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
12 Article – Education  
13 Section 7–1A–01(a), (c), (d), and (e)  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2022 Replacement Volume)

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 6–120.

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

21 (2) “Alternative teacher preparation program” means a program  
22 [established]:

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1                   **(I) 1. ESTABLISHED** by a county board, **AN INSTITUTION OF**  
 2 **HIGHER EDUCATION, OR A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION** and approved by the State  
 3 Superintendent [that:]; **OR**

4                   **2. ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT;**

5                   **[(i) (II) [Leads] THAT LEADS** to a participant receiving a  
 6 Resident Teacher Certificate issued by the Department; and

7                   **[(ii) (III) [Includes] THAT INCLUDES** teaching assignments with  
 8 supervision and mentoring by a qualified teacher.

9                   **(3) “ELIGIBLE PREKINDERGARTEN PROVIDER” HAS THE MEANING**  
 10 **STATED IN § 7-1A-01 OF THIS ARTICLE.**

11                   **[(3) (4) “Partner school”** means a local school system, nonpublic school,  
 12 **[or] nonpublic special education school, OR ELIGIBLE PREKINDERGARTEN PROVIDER**  
 13 **that has a written partnership agreement with an institution of higher education or**  
 14 **alternative teacher preparation program to provide a teacher training practicum for**  
 15 **participants enrolled in a teacher preparation program at the institution of higher**  
 16 **education or alternative teacher preparation program.**

17                   **(b) (1) Each participant in an undergraduate and a graduate teacher**  
 18 **preparation program shall complete a teacher training practicum as a requirement for**  
 19 **graduation.**

20                   **(2) [An] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS**  
 21 **SUBSECTION, AN alternative teacher preparation program shall require each participant**  
 22 **to successfully complete a teacher training practicum.**

23                   **(3) (I) AN ALTERNATIVE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR**  
 24 **AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CERTIFICATION SHALL REQUIRE EACH**  
 25 **PARTICIPANT TO SUCCESSFULLY:**

26                   **1. COMPLETE A TEACHER TRAINING PRACTICUM; OR**

27                   **2. SATISFY CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY THE**  
 28 **DEPARTMENT UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH THAT EVALUATES**  
 29 **THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FROM PRIOR LEARNING RELATING TO EARLY**  
 30 **CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.**

31                   **(II) THE DEPARTMENT, IN COLLABORATION WITH**  
 32 **INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SHALL ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR AND**  
 33 **CRITERIA TO EVALUATE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FROM PRIOR LEARNING**

1 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, INCLUDING FROM A REGISTERED  
2 APPRENTICESHIP.

3 7–1A–01.

4 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

5 (c) “Eligible prekindergarten provider” includes an:

6 (1) Eligible public provider; and

7 (2) Eligible private provider.

8 (d) (1) “Eligible private provider” means a community–based early learning  
9 program that:

10 (i) Is licensed in the State;

11 (ii) Does not charge more tuition for full–day prekindergarten than  
12 the cost of quality; and

13 (iii) Meets the requirements under § 7–1A–04 of this subtitle.

14 (2) “Eligible private provider” includes the Ulysses Currie Head Start  
15 Program under § 5–231 of this article.

16 (e) “Eligible public provider” means an early learning program that:

17 (1) Is provided by a county board at a public school; and

18 (2) Meets the requirements under § 7–1A–04 of this subtitle.

19 7–1A–04.

20 (a) All eligible prekindergarten providers shall include structural elements that  
21 are evidence–based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality,  
22 including:

23 (1) Beginning in the 2025–2026 school year:

24 (i) High staff qualifications, including teachers who, at a  
25 minimum[, hold]:

26 1. [State] **HOLD STATE** certification for teaching in early  
27 childhood education; [or]

1                                   2.     **[A] HOLD** A bachelor's degree in any field and are  
2 pursuing residency through the Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program,  
3 which includes early childhood coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of pedagogical  
4 content knowledge; **OR**

5                                   **3.     ARE PURSUING STATE CERTIFICATION THROUGH AN**  
6 **ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER §**  
7 **6–120 OF THIS ARTICLE;** and

8                                   (ii)    Teaching assistants who have at least:

9                                   1.     A Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate; or

10                                  2.     An associate's degree;

11                                  (2)    Professional development for all staff;

12                                  (3)    A student-to-classroom personnel ratio of no more than 10 to 1 in each  
13 class;

14                                  (4)    Class sizes of no more than 20 students per classroom;

15                                  (5)    A full-day prekindergarten program;

16                                  (6)    Inclusion of students with disabilities to ensure access to and full  
17 participation in all program opportunities;

18                                  (7)    For at least 1 year before a student's enrollment in kindergarten,  
19 learning environments that:

20                                   (i)     Are aligned with State Early Learning and Development  
21 Standards;

22                                   (ii)    Use evidence-based curricula; and

23                                   (iii)   Use instruction methods that are:

24                                   1.     Developmentally appropriate; and

25                                   2.     Culturally and linguistically responsive;

26                                  (8)    Individualized accommodations and supports for all students;

27                                  (9)    Instructional staff salaries and benefits that are comparable to the  
28 salaries and benefits of instructional staff employed by the county board of the county in  
29 which the early learning program is located;

1           (10) Program evaluation to ensure continuous program improvement;

2           (11) On-site or accessible comprehensive services for students;

3           (12) Community partnerships that promote access to comprehensive  
4 services for families of students; and

5           (13) Evidence-based health and safety standards.

6           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
7 1, 2023.