

HB1219_MSEA_Bost_FAV.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Testimony SUPPORT of House Bill 1219
Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023**

**House Ways and Means Committee
House Appropriations Committee
March 1, 2023**

**Cheryl Bost
President**

The Maryland State Education Association strongly supports Governor Moore's Educator Shortage Act, House Bill 1219, which seeks address the shortage of educators and inadequate pipeline to supply their rants. This bill is one of MSEA's top 2023 legislative priorities to help address the educator shortage and excessive workloads.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

This session has created exciting and important opportunities for educators to partner with legislative leaders to build on the legislature's strong record of commitment to our public schools with policies to meet this moment and ensure that no Marylanders are left behind. Educators are focused on helping students excel after the pandemic yet are doing so in the face of excessive workload issues which are exacerbated by staffing shortages in every school building. The pipeline of educators continues to be insufficient while challenging working conditions and years of inadequate pay make it hard to retain the outstanding professionals whom students and families depend on. At the same time, many of our students require more support and services than ever.

The bill would achieve several goals that are important for ensuring public schools are fully staffed and providing needed resources to students, including establishing a paid internship program for aspiring educators. Aspiring educators are pre-service teachers, folks who are in undergraduate or graduate programs working towards getting their teaching certificates. Across the county, teacher preparation programs are experiencing declines in enrollment. A study conducted by American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education shows that at least 20 percent of institutions reported an 11 percent drop in undergraduate enrollment while surveys showed that pay and



working conditions are the top reasons why prospective college students are choosing other career paths. The cost of student loans is another large factor impacting students moving into the teaching profession. Financial investments in future educators could be the difference in turning the tide against recruitment and retention issues within the profession, especially for teacher candidates of color. When pursuing their teaching certificate, students are required to do a teaching internship, many of us know this as “student teaching.” During that year, undergraduate or graduate students are paying tuition and fees at their institute of higher education, working full-time in the public schools without pay, and unable to take another job. This is a huge financial barrier to students and frequently acts as a deterrent to getting into the education field. Like in the Educator Shortage Act, eight other states offer some form of compensation or tuition assistance for teacher candidates.

Governor Moore’s bill builds off of some local success from Western Maryland. Washington County used Maryland Leads federal grant money to pilot paid teacher apprenticeships and stipends for mentors. Under an agreement between Frostburg State University, the Washington County Teachers Association, and Washington County Public Schools, MAT teacher-candidates received \$30,000 for SY22-23 if they agreed to return to teach in a Western Maryland county for 5 years. Mentor teachers for the MAT program received \$5,000 stipends, and mentor teachers for a student teaching program received \$1,000 stipends.

The Educator Shortage Act would also set targets for the recruitment and retention of teachers in teacher preparation programs, including requiring the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to create a dashboard for educator recruitment, retention, and diversity. Further, it requires the state to join the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact to create reciprocity among participant states and reduce the barriers to license portability and employment.

In addition, the bill reforms the Teaching Fellows for Maryland program, expands eligibility, and directs MSDE to publicize the program at HBCUs and to students who are members of groups that are under-represented among teachers. The Teaching Fellows for Maryland scholarship was designed under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to strengthen the teacher pipeline by providing financial incentives for future educators. Aspiring educators in undergraduate or graduate programs who commit to teach in a Maryland school after graduation can receive tuition, room, and board for up to 4 years, increasing equity and access to the profession. Unfortunately, the program requirements have proven too narrow, and the program has received inadequate promotion. The Maryland Higher Education Commission has awarded fewer scholarships than the allocated funding allows, just as pre-service teachers are leaving



preparation programs due to untenable financial pressures unique to the teaching profession. This bill would broaden the requirements and help improve the teaching pipeline.

Finally, the bill establishes the Grow Our Own Educators Scholarship Program and Fund, which includes a four-year service requirement in a public school or pre-k program and scholarships for tuition and mandatory fees. Grow Your Own programs are flourishing around the country as a way increase the number of educators in the pipeline. The beauty of these programs is that they are designed to harvest promising teacher candidates from school systems who are already working in our schools as Education Support Professionals. These are people who are already dedicated to their community and students, and need help transitioning to the teaching ranks. This is also a proven strategy to help diversity the teaching profession.

Along with full funding of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the Maryland Educator Shortage Act helps to make progress on the educator shortage that school systems across the state are struggling with. Financial investments in future educators could be the difference in turning the tide against recruitment and retention issues within the profession, while also focusing efforts to build a diverse teaching force.

MSEA strongly urges a favorable report of House Bill 1219.

HB1219_FAV_MSCCA.pdf

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Important Natural Resource™**

Maryland State Child Care Association

2810 Carrollton Road
Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5000 professionals working in the field of early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resources and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.

Testimony in Favor
HB 1219 Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023
March 1, 2023
Submitted to: Ways and Means Committee

The Maryland State Child Care Association enthusiastically supports HB 1219. We applaud the administration and many sponsors for recognizing, as well as addressing numerous educator workforce shortages and barriers impacting our state, our children, our families and our education system.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing in our youngest citizens. In order to accomplish a Mixed-Delivery Pre-K system, involving both public schools and private community-based childcare providers, will be needed to accommodate the number of students. In order to attain the goals set by the *Blueprint* for mixed delivery, it is imperative to understand the unintended consequences and also the numerous barriers for private providers to achieve the current codified requirements including the teacher state pre-k-3 certification requirements.

The AIB, MSDE and sponsors understand and support the need to create alternative pathways to be inclusive of community-based providers/programs along with addressing the critical workforce shortages. HB 1219 will address ways to achieve the goals of the *Blueprint* and takes steps to overcome barriers and inequities without sacrificing quality or closing businesses to participate, which hurts parents who need care for birth to five in Maryland. Child care providers cannot afford to lose their three and four year olds to public schools, however not all are willing nor can equitably participate in the expansion of public pre-k. More unintended consequences include less access and affordability for infant and toddler care, more child care providers closing businesses and more unlicensed/illegal child care which leads to poor outcomes for children.

Blueprint Pillar 1 has many important goals including a substantial increase in the supply of early childhood education teachers, funding for both public-school and community-based pre-k, and measurables including reducing or eliminating achievement gaps. The Accountability and Implementation Board created a report that offers recommendations related to Pillar 1 and recognizes some of the barriers for a true mixed delivery system for prekindergarten in Maryland—requiring that all providers, both public and private, meet certain standards to receive public funding.

MSCCA is concerned as the *Blueprint*, especially related to Pillar 1 is implemented and we are still recovering from a pandemic. Many businesses are all struggling with a critical workforce shortage. Public schools are adjusting qualifications and soliciting in any way they can to fill teacher shortages. Child care is also struggling. Maryland lost over 800 child care programs since 2020, about 10%, and although many jobs have recovered, child care has lagged behind. Maryland is second highest in the country for loss of child care jobs at an alarming 25.5%, according to the June 2022 jobs report. (<https://communitychangeaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/June-9-State-by-State-Analysis-of-Changes-in-the-Child-Care-Sector-Over-the-Pandemic.pdf>)

Recovery of jobs in the child care industry specifically has been slower than most other industries. According to Bureau of Labor and Statistics in October 2022 figures show that employment in the child care sector is still 8.5% lower than February 2020. This is a shortage of approximately 88,000 jobs. The slow recovery in child care sector is due to numerous factors including closures and other pandemic related issues as well as a workforce leaving for better compensating jobs. The persistent shortages in child care has a ripple impact across the economy. Child care is an economic and equity imperative and essential to everyone, even if you do not have children or your children are adults.

We applaud the goals for mixed delivery, and you say you need child care providers to reach the Blueprint Pillar 1 goals, however there were only 90 applicants for the prek grants and of the 90 less than 30 were awarded. This number doesn't come close to meeting the 70/30 minimum split (or the final recommendations of 50/50 split) to deliver prek. Barriers include teacher certification requirements, lack of an equitable alternative pathway to certification for community providers, lack of resources to successfully write for and administer very complex prek grants and funding flows. Another barrier to true mixed delivery system is the issue of funding. This pre-k grant is flat funded, with a per child rate across the state. No other early childhood program is flat funded. The cost of living, and the cost of operating a business, varies across the state. The total cost of quality childcare has not been considered based on these differentials. The amount currently offered might fully fund a program in Western Maryland, but will probably not break even for a program in the central part of the state, yet both programs receive the same dollar amount per slot.

Maryland should consider other states alternatives as they adjust and consider the importance of essential child care. This school year Boston UPK will launch a new **per classroom funding formula** to ensure high quality learning environments for students. The new funding formula and rate will provide financial and operational stability to child care providers, empower them to implement high quality programming and ensure teachers at community sites receive pay commensurate with staff in district run schools. Providing per classroom instead of per pupil funding will provide stability for child care providers who have been greatly impacted by COVID. Boston mixed delivery model ensures family choice and that there is no wrong door for families looking for high quality prek experience. [\\$20 Million Investment to Expand Boston's Universal Pre-K Program | Boston.gov](#)

The interesting data from MSDE is that we already meet numerous requirements for Pillar 1. Maryland EXCELS reports there are 1,283 levels 3,4, and 5 programs participating therefore plenty to meet the 70/30 recommended split. Additionally, according to MSDE's database 1,993 child care teachers have bachelor's degrees, 403 with masters degrees, 14 with doctorates and 66 with foreign degrees. We should easily be able to meet the mixed delivery goals and avoid waivers in Blueprint, which will become the norm, but cannot if we don't make equitable changes including; expanding and creating provisional alternative pathways, giving credit for prior learning, credit for experience in the field, stackable credentials, timelines to achieve certification or equivalencies/alternatives for pre-k teacher certification, alignment of the current credentialing system with college credit, recognition and respect of competencies and work experience, as well as sustainable funding formulas to be competitive.

Greater emphasis on **equitable, fully funded**, alternative pathways and supports that meet the needs of Early Childhood professionals currently working in the field is needed. This means considering multiple entry points: EC professionals may be starting with a H.S. diploma, an A.A. degree, or a Bachelor's or Master's degree. Each of these professionals needs a pathway to certification if we are to meet the demand for teachers.

Examples of Needed Pathways and Supports Include:

Apprenticeships, competency-based education models, stackable and portable course work and credits, course work that meets the needs of teachers whose primary language is not English, remedial course work for those who need it prior to enrolling in college-level courses, and coaching and support to ensure persistence in higher education. The ECE field needs bold and innovative approaches, like HB 1219 to address the workforce crisis AND approaches that meet the needs of the Birth to age 5 workforce that is currently employed across the state. We recommend and appreciate includes legislative language that mandates the development of innovative approaches to certification in Maryland to ensure that the vision of a mixed delivery system is realized, and that further degradation of the childcare infrastructure is averted.

If more licensed child care businesses close due to the loss of four year old's and a portion of income eligible three year old's because we cannot compete with public schools in prek arena for teachers, how will this impact goals to increase supply of teachers and reduce achievement gaps when infants toddlers twos and some three year old's will have less access to high quality child care, be forced into unlicensed or informal care which is proven to have poor kindergarten readiness outcomes? We are already losing our teachers to Amazon, Target, Washington DC child care jobs which are paying 15k bonuses as well as parity with public prek teachers and no teacher certification requirements. More unintended consequences will include higher infant toddler tuition which parents can barely access and afford now. We lost our kindergarteners when preschool for all rolled out and we pivoted the best we could, however we cannot survive without 3- and 4-year-olds.

The public pre-k grant parameters specify that if a program is not 85% enrolled by December 31, funding will be diminished by the number of unfilled slots. This is a burdensome penalty placed on community providers. It is my understanding that funding for public schools is not reduced if their enrollment targets are not met, so why are community providers penalized for this? A program that applies for this grant in good faith and commits to hold childcare slots open for income eligible children will incur the same fixed operating costs regardless of whether they are fully enrolled or not. Just like public schools, a community program must continue to pay the full salary and benefits of the lead and assistant teachers, they still pay the full amount of rent and facility maintenance costs, they still pay the full amount of water, gas, and electric regardless of how many children are enrolled. The difference for the community provider is that once the program commits to enrolling a certain number of income eligible children, they must leave those slots open and cannot give them away to a full tuition paying family.

The grant also stipulates that MSDE will provide support with recruitment to help community-based programs fill those committed slots. However, the only support MSDE has provided has been to suggest talking with the LEA or putting fliers up in the community. For a program that has already taken these steps, and paid for advertising, and reached out to as many community partners as possible to spread the word about the prekindergarten slots available at their program, yet still is unable to find eligible children to enroll, they not only are NOT receiving support from MSDE, but the program is also penalized and has money taken away that they can't afford to lose.

Additionally, there are costs associated with this grant that are not accounted for regarding teacher certification. To begin with, finding certified teachers is a challenge everywhere. According to University of Maryland, College Park in the School of Education, adjunct faculty, Randi Albertsen, over the past 2 years, the capacity of incoming students in her class has been 25, yet she has not had more than 12 potential teachers enrolled. People just are not choosing to go into this field. The current system to participate in public prekindergarten expansion as a mixed delivery system as it exists places a much higher burden on the childcare community, with barriers to participation at every turn. If the state intends to implement the Blueprint to fidelity, then it needs to create a more equitable, accessible system for community-based providers. HB 1219 takes necessary steps to address the critical workforce shortages, acknowledge and address equity issues in alternative prek pathways and focus on viable solutions to numerous problems that have very real unintended consequences for children, families, child care/early childhood education.

MSCCA recommends a favorable committee report on HB 1219.

HB 1219.Educator Shortage Act.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FAV



621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-5414 · 800-841-8197 · Fax: 410-841-6580 · MABE.org

BILL: House Bill 1219
TITLE: Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023
DATE: March 1, 2023
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, supports House Bill 1219 which features key initiatives to make bold and innovative progress to alleviate critical teacher and educator shortages in Maryland's public schools.

MABE has consistently supported efforts by the General Assembly to assist local school systems in addressing the critical shortages of highly qualified teachers, principals, and other staff in every school and the classrooms of all students across the State. At this time, Maryland is experiencing critical shortages across all of the educational and related services professional fields; a critical shortage of the staff needed to deliver and support student learning and to administer schools as educational leaders.

The Governor's Educator Shortage Act includes major initiatives to expand the alternative teacher certification program to include educators in prekindergarten programs, create a new Maryland Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity Dashboard, have Maryland join the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact, reform the Teachers Fellows for Maryland scholarship program, and codify the Grow Our Own Educators Scholarship Program and Educator Internship Stipend Program. Through these programs, Maryland should be able to make meaningful progress toward recruiting and retaining high-quality and diverse educators from PreK through 12th grade. Importantly, House Bill 1219 closely aligns with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future provisions related to educator compensation and professionalism which are also intended to reduce the teacher shortage across the state.

MABE firmly believes that the role of a full complement of qualified staff will be pivotal to the successful implementation of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint features major expansions of full-day prekindergarten, student behavioral health services, college readiness courses, and career and technical education programs. Passage of House Bill 1219 will certainly advance the statewide effort to recruit, educate, and retain the professional educators essential to meet these objectives.

All local boards of education value the essential role of the educators and staff persons who work for the public school system as the keys to educating and meeting the needs of our students. Unfortunately, Maryland continues to experience a major teacher shortage due to a number of factors including the low number of teacher candidates graduating from Maryland's universities, the number of potential teachers entering the profession, and the competitiveness of working condition and salaries. Again, MABE greatly appreciates that the Blueprint addresses these issues by mandating minimum salaries of \$60,000 for teachers, providing raises for teachers based on National Board Certification, and reducing the amount of time teachers are obligated to be in classrooms. However, the Blueprint also mandates dramatically expanded full-day prekindergarten programs offered by public schools and private providers. Therefore, MABE appreciates that House Bill 1219 directly addresses the challenges to recruit and educate more early educators to meet these demands.

For these reasons, MABE urges a favorable report on House Bill 1219.

HB 1219.Educator Shortage Act- Karen Yoho.pdf

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Position: FAV

BILL: House Bill 1219
TITLE: Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023
DATE: March 1, 2023
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
CONTACT: Karen Yoho, Chair, MABE Legislative Committee

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For these reasons, MABE urges a favorable report on House Bill 1219.

HB 1219_MFN_FAV_Weeldreyer.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Weeldreyer

Position: FAV



Testimony Concerning HB 1219
“Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023”
Submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee
March 1, 2023

Position: Favorable

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports HB 1219, which would among other things adjust the requirements for early childhood education (ECE) teacher certification obtained through an alternative preparation program and would establish competency-based certification criteria for pre-K providers. In these ways, the legislation would help address significant barriers to fulfilling the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future’s ambitious and critically important goals for pre-K expansion.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

The Blueprint states that pre-K teachers shall hold State ECE teaching certification or a bachelor’s degree in any field while they pursue alternative certification beginning in the 2025–26 academic year. Increasing the number of high-quality ECE providers and educators is essential to the Blueprint’s expansion of full-day pre-K for all 4-year-olds and for 3-year-olds from low-income households. The Blueprint mandates a public-private delivery system in which schools partner with high-quality, community-based ECE programs. The importance of public-private delivery is four-fold: it allows school systems to focus funds on instruction rather than enormous new capital costs; it better meets the wrap-around care needs of working parents; it incentivizes the expansion of quality for all children served in the community-based programs, not just the pre-K population; and it avoids undermining the affordability of child care for children birth through age 3.

The proposed adjustments to alternative certification will enable childcare providers to meet certification requirements while maintaining their jobs and keeping their programs operational. This will also help increase the diversity of ECE educators. The establishment of competency-based certification criteria will not diminish quality standards but rather give providers and the State new and necessary flexibility in determining that the standards are met.

MFN urges the Committee’s favorable consideration of HB 1219.

Eric Luedtke Testimony HB1219.pdf

Uploaded by: Meghan Music

Position: FAV



WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER
LT GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND
21401-1925

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and honorable members of the Ways and Means Committee and the jointly assisted Appropriations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1219, the Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023.

For the record, I am Eric Luedtke, Chief Legislative Officer to Governor Wes Moore.

House Bill 1219, The Maryland Educator Shortage Act, addresses the significant shortages in education personnel that school districts across Maryland have been experiencing. It is a long bill with many parts, but it is easiest to think of House Bill 1219 as addressing this challenge in seven ways.

The first is expanding access to the Teaching Fellows for Maryland Program. This scholarship program assists in making tuition affordable for college students working towards a degree to become a teacher. Currently, this program is underutilized, but with reform, this program has the potential to encourage more young individuals to enter the educational profession.

Second, establishing a new program that provides stipends to student teachers participating in the teacher internship, which they must complete to earn their certification. Currently, teacher internships are unpaid and cause a severe burden to lower-income students who are often already managing a full course load and a full or part-time job to pay their way through school.

Third, establishing a new grant program to support local school systems, higher education institutions, and alternative teacher preparation programs to train non-certificated educators in certificated careers. In creating Grow Your Own programs, we can assist current non-certified educational personnel to earn their certification. In addition to helping grow teacher training ranks in Maryland, access to a program as such would be an incentive for Marylanders to sign up as paraeducators or in other educational support roles.

Next, House Bill 1219 will require higher education institutions to establish specific goals for recruiting and retaining student teachers.

In addition to requiring higher education institutions to establish specific goals, House Bill 1219 requires the Maryland State Department of Education to create an educator recruitment,

retention, and diversity dashboard to provide the general public with information about educator shortages and their impact on schools across Maryland.

Lastly, the Maryland Educator Shortage Act aims to clarify the qualifications of the early childhood educators to be considered highly qualified and acceding Maryland to the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact.

We have an opportunity with this bill to continue to support Maryland Educators and address the current educator shortage by incentivizing individuals to pursue a career in teaching, making education more accessible, and helping current and future teachers in order to ensure they succeed. We have already identified some sections in the bill as introduced and are committed to working on amendments with the Committee and stakeholders. I look forward to working with each of you to help strengthen our educator training pipeline.

I urge a favorable report on House Bill 1219.

SEIU 500 HB 1219 - SUPPORTIVE - Maryland Educator

Uploaded by: Sally Murek

Position: FAV



**Hearing Testimony March 1, 2023
House Ways and Means Committee
Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**

House Bill 1219 – Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023

SUPPORT

Good afternoon, my name is Sally Murek and I am proud member and a Vice President of SEIU Local 500 and the Coordinator for the Paraeducator Program at Montgomery County Public Schools. SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. By representing childcare workers, public school support staff, and college professors our members are well aware of shortages we are facing among educators in this state.

We thank Governor Moore for his leadership and solution-oriented approach to dealing with the challenges we face in Maryland's education system.

As drafted, this bill seeks to expand and diversify the pool of newly certificated educators in Maryland by expanding eligibility for the Teaching Fellows for Maryland program and creating a new program to pay student teachers for their teacher internships. In addition, it creates a new grant to help local school systems and institutions of higher education develop grow your own programs to help non-certificated educational personnel to become certified. This bill also complies Maryland to the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact and creates a dashboard to share information about teacher diversity and qualifications. Lastly, and a top priority for SEIU Local 500, it modifies language regarding the definition of a highly qualified early childhood educator.

What defines a highly qualified early childhood educator is key to meeting the goals of universal Pre-K as set before us in the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*. In order to accomplish this, a Mixed-Delivery Pre-K system, involving both public schools and private childcare providers, will be needed to accommodate the number of students. To attain the goals set by the *Blueprint* for mixed delivery, Maryland must work to remove barriers for private providers to achieve the certifications needed - without needing to sacrifice their businesses. In order to offer a Pre-Kindergarten program, childcare providers must first be certified through the state of Maryland by a county board. Currently, both

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC
901 Russell Avenue, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20879
301-740-7100 www.seiu500.org
Pia Morrison, President**



Teacher Preparation Programs and Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs require a teacher residency, which are typically run through local school systems that do not offer Pre-Kindergarten classes-- meaning that these Pre-K teachers are completing practicums in K-12 schools, not qualified Pre-Kindergarten programs. Often times, these aspiring teachers are forced to close the doors of their child care during this residency as they cannot continue their own childcare operations when placed in a local school system. This is simply not an option for the thousands of Family Child Care Providers that would potentially be a part of Pre-Kindergarten expansion.

SEIU Local 500 and its members support alternative pathways for teacher certification for child care providers. We encourage that this alternative pathway contain the following tenants: allowing institutions of Higher Education, nonprofit organizations, or stakeholder organizations, in addition to County Board's, to establish an Alternative Teacher Program with approval by the State Superintendent.

Thank you for your kind consideration and we **strongly urge a favorable report for HB 1219.**

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC
901 Russell Avenue, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20879
301-740-7100 www.seiu500.org
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