



# ESMEC

Serving the Public County School Systems of  
Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent  
Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester

**Eastern Shore of Maryland Educational Consortium**

---

The Eastern Shore of Maryland Education Consortium (ESMEC) Blended Virtual Program (BVP) is not a school but a program. In Senate Bill 610 in paragraph on page 21 line 28-34 where it states that the BVP is allowed to continue to operate "as a virtual school" is concerning. This indicates that we are allowed to continue but must conform to the "virtual school" parameters. Last year we were told that we have to meet the parameters by the end of the 2024-2025 school year, but if we have to meet them immediately next year, it would be impossible to continue offering this option on the eastern shore.

The **main roadblocks** for the current BVP to continue with Senate Bill 610 as written are:

1. Requiring a "unique school code" (p. 6, In 22-23)
2. No contracting with for-profit entities to "operate or administer" a virtual school (p. 6, In 24-29) - Each district provides a representative to administer and operate the program for the district and that the vendor provides services (LMS, Curriculum, Teachers, Tutoring).
3. MSEA and the requirement for teachers to be employed by the county and part of the collective bargaining agreement (p. 10, In 25-28) - as it is now, all of Edmentum's teachers with the BVP have a MD teaching certificate (p. 10, In 23-24)

### **Important to highlight:**

1. **SERVICES:**
  - a. Local schools provide all wraparound services and for small districts with 6-20 BVP students, they cannot support the additional expenses for that. Local schools are receiving the per-pupil funding for all virtual students and are using that money to support students with these extra services.
  - b. Local schools provide all special education teachers and support. (BVP teachers will attend IEP meetings and make accommodations to meet SPED plans, but it is up to the district to make sure these students receive the appropriate coaching and support to meet the accommodations.
  - c. Edmentum provides us with 3 student success coordinators (SSCs) who meet 1-on-1 weekly with students to check in and offer SEL and academic support. We get phenomenal feedback on this piece of the program because it is something even in-person students do not get (1-1 time with an adult).

- d. Local school counselors complete BVP student scheduling to ensure that students are on track for graduation.

**2. TEACHERS & STAFFING:**

- a. The BVP teachers provide synchronous instruction, as well as offer 1 office hour and 1 study hall hour weekly. They are accessible to parents and students by email daily and can meet/zoom with students or families outside of this time as allowed by their schedule.
- b. Within our current agreement with Edmentum, we have the ability to shift to using local teachers at any time. The issue is a lack of teachers and not being able to pull an existing teacher without disturbing already increasing in-person class sizes. We currently have 15 teachers teaching for the BVP.

**3. LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- a. Local schools are accountable for the BVP student results because they complete all state testing at their school of record and include all attendance and academic data in their reporting to MSDE.
- b. Local schools are the final decision makers. They select the courses offered as well as the levels (regular/honors/AP) within their district. Our 6 districts do not all have the same prescribed courses. They are tailored to meet the system's needs.
- c. If MSDE wants to see the ESMEC BVP data as an entire program (not just by school), we can provide the aggregated data at any time.
  - i. 2021- 2022 school year had a 83% pass rate of courses.
  - ii. 2022-2023 school year has a pass rate for the first semester of 86%.

**4. ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:**

- a. Allowing students to be part of the local school means they will build relationships with counselors and other school based staff so that if they return to in-person learning in the future, they will already have connections within the school. They can also participate in existing extracurriculars with friends.
- b. Dual Enrollment students can enroll in the BVP if their college / work study times conflict with in-person course times or if transportation is an issue.

- c. As a "program" instead of a "school," districts will not have to come up with additional funding to supply an administrator and counselor(s). The students are added to existing counselor/administrator caseloads.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly L. Griffith, Ed.D.

Kelly L. Griffith, Executive Director, Eastern Shore of Maryland Educational Consortium

202 Chesterfield Avenue | Centreville, MD 21617 | Cell: 410-924-8045 | Email: [esmec@qacps.org](mailto:esmec@qacps.org) | [www.esmec.org](http://www.esmec.org)