

BILL: Senate Bill 0084 **DATE:** Jan 23, 2024

SUBJECT: Teacher Degree Apprenticeship **COMMITTEE:** Finance

POSITION: Information Only

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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding Senate Bill (SB) 0084 – Teacher Degree Apprenticeship, which establishes a teacher apprenticeship startup grant program in the Department of Labor to establish a cohort of high school students, college students, and career changes who are qualified to work as paraprofessionals and teachers.

SB0084, as currently written, requires a minimum of three local education agencies (LEAs) to constitute a “sponsor” for a teacher apprenticeship program. In Maryland, LEAs must work with their local collective bargaining units when developing policies associated with employment, such as wages, benefits, and leave. Given the unique needs of each of Maryland’s LEAs, the requirement that at least three LEAs develop an apprenticeship program together may cause unintended challenges and result in fewer viable programs. Additionally, although SB0084 requires LEAs to “consult” with their union partners, the development of a successful teacher apprenticeship program will require a strong partnership between the LEA and their local union partners.

Youth apprenticeships in Maryland are designated career and technical education (CTE) programs. MSDE is currently responsible for the fiscal implementation, coordination, evaluation, and continual improvement of the career and technical education activities carried out under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), including the implementation of high-quality CTE programs that align with state and local education. This bill potentially conflicts with the Perkins V as it provides the Maryland CTE Committee the authority to determine if any changes to the rules, regulations, procedures, or funding of the MSDE are necessary to implement the proposed Teacher Degree Apprenticeship grant program. Further, SB 0084, proposes shifting the management of Perkins funding to an organization outside the federally defined "eligible agency." It is essential to recognize the implications of such a shift. Federal law requires the management of Perkins funding to be under an eligible agency like the State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education. Any deviation from this could potentially conflict with the federal guidelines set by the Perkins Act.

Finally, SB0084 does not require the involvement of MSDE in the review process for teacher apprenticeships. As MSDE is responsible for the approval and oversight of teacher preparation, as well as the implementation of teacher certification requirements, it is critical that teacher apprenticeship programs are reviewed by MSDE to ensure that they meet the requirements for teacher certification

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established in law and regulation prior to being submitted to the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council for approval.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate SB0084. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne at 410-767-0504, or akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov.