



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony in Support of HB0325

Submitted to House Ways and Means Committee **Position: Support**

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAAYC) supports HB 0325-Adult Education High School Diploma by Examination.

MDAAYC is a professional association of 1,700 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

January 27, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

Support: HB 0325

As a current member of the MDAAYC Public Policy Committee and former childcare Director/Operator for 48 years I would like to give full support for HB 0325, Adult Education-High School Diploma by Examination-Requirements and Study.

The field of early childhood is facing a critical workforce shortage of early childhood educators in childcare and early childhood education programs, both public and private. This bill would support many potential childcare staff and early childhood educators by giving them the opportunity to achieve a High School Equivalency by examination in languages other than English, in their natural language.

There is a substantial immigration community in Maryland, many who never had an opportunity to complete High School due to war time or lack of opportunity but would like to further their education by earning a high school equivalency. Being able to take the examination in their natural spoken language could help them successfully attain that goal.

Once high school equivalency is achieved, there is an opportunity to complete 90 hours of non-college credits in Child Development and Methods and Materials to qualify as a preschool teacher in licensed child care centers. It also opens opportunities to enroll in college coursework towards earning a college degree. This could be a significant step in growing more teachers in Maryland.

Please vote this favorably to help solve the childcare staffing shortage.

If you have questions, please contact: MDAAYC Public Policy Committee: Stephanie Schaefer, PH.D. stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org or Flora L Gee, M.Ed. flora.gee@mdaeyc.org