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Appropriations Committee

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Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB1277 Education - Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity - Establishment

Hearing: March 10, 2026, 1:00pm

Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Anne Kaiser

Appropriations Committee

House Bill 1277 creates a statewide research and technical assistance center organized as a partnership between the University of Maryland, College Park and Morgan State University. Together, these institutions would serve as a statewide hub for research, policy development, and technical assistance to support the implementation of evidence-based and equity-focused literacy practices across Maryland.

Maryland currently lacks something that many other states already have, a dedicated university-based center focused on literacy research and implementation support. States such as Virginia and Pennsylvania have established statewide literacy research and technical assistance centers that connect academic research with classroom practice. Maryland, despite having world-class universities and educators, does not currently have comparable infrastructure.

House Bill 1277 addresses this gap by establishing the Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity. The Institute will leverage the strengths of both institutions to support schools and communities across Maryland by conducting the following:

The Institute will:

- Conduct cutting-edge research on language and literacy to identify effective instructional practices;

- Provide technical assistance to the Maryland State Department of Education and local school systems to support the implementation of evidence-based literacy instruction and interventions;
- Offer training and professional development opportunities for educators and literacy professionals;
- Help school systems analyze data and develop action plans to improve literacy outcomes;
- Facilitate collaboration among educators, researchers, policymakers, and community organizations; and
- Engage families, libraries, and community programs to promote literacy beyond the classroom.

Importantly, this work is already beginning to take shape through collaboration between the two institutions.

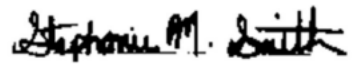
Working together as MILE, Morgan State and the University of Maryland have already developed strong partnerships with MSDE and the Accountability and Implementation Board, including conducting reviews of Comprehensive Literacy Plans for all 24 local education agencies in Maryland and providing customized feedback and support to districts. Because the partnership is based here in Maryland and closely connected to our schools and communities, the team was able to complete this extensive review in just six months.

MILE has also partnered with MSDE to host a Statewide Literacy Summit, bringing together nearly 300 school and district leaders, along with representatives from every educator preparation program in the State, to collaborate on strengthening literacy instruction. Since then, the partnership has continued convening educator preparation programs across Maryland to address how we better prepare both new and experienced teachers to teach reading and writing effectively.

House Bill 1277 builds on this momentum by formally establishing MILE as a state-supported research and technical assistance center, ensuring Maryland has the infrastructure needed to support effective literacy practices across all of our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report for HB1277.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a distinct loop at the end of the last name.

Delegate Stephanie Smith