

House Ways and Means Committee

April 1, 2026

**SB 529 – Southern Maryland Early College Teacher Pathway Program and Program Workgroup -
Establishment**

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland’s 16 community colleges, supports **SB 529** with amendments. Community colleges are the primary providers of dual enrollment and early college instruction across the State and already operate robust, regionally tailored pathways into teaching and other high-need professions, including in Southern Maryland. As such, MACC approaches new early college initiatives with an interest in ensuring alignment with existing community college programs, capacity, and expertise.

SB 529 establishes a Southern Maryland Early College Teacher Pathway Program and a Program Workgroup to develop recommendations for implementation in coordination with State agencies and higher education partners. MACC appreciates the additional structure provided in the amended bill, including the development process led by the University System of Maryland in consultation with the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission, as well as the inclusion of the College of Southern Maryland as a member of the Program Workgroup.

While MACC continues to have questions about how this new program will intersect with existing community college-led dual enrollment and teacher preparation efforts, we recognize the interest of regional partners in advancing additional teacher pipeline strategies and understand that this proposal is moving forward. Importantly, the bill is intended to serve as a model for potential statewide replication, which further underscores the need for broader system-level coordination.

Given the central role community colleges play in early college delivery, dual enrollment instruction, and teacher pipeline development, MACC believes it is essential that Maryland’s community colleges have formal representation in the development of this program. While the bill includes representation from a single institution, it does not include a statewide community college perspective that reflects broader operational, academic, and policy considerations.

Including the MACC Executive Director or the Executive Director’s designee on the Program Workgroup would help ensure coordination, avoid duplication, and strengthen alignment with existing community college programs across Maryland—particularly as the State considers future expansion of this model.

Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **SB 529** with **AMENDMENTS** to include the MACC Executive Director or the Executive Director’s designee as a member of the Southern Maryland Early College Teacher Pathway Program Workgroup.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.