
TO: House Committee on Ways and Means

BILL: House Bill (HB) 1077 - Career and Technical Education – Workgroup to Study Tiered Stackable Credentials Framework

DATE: March 10, 2026

POSITION: Letter of Information

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) extends this letter of information on House Bill (HB) 1077 - Career and Technical Education – Workgroup to Study Tiered Stackable Credentials Framework, which requires MSDE and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee to convene a joint workgroup to review the State’s high school curriculum, graduation requirements, and post-College and Career Readiness (post-CCR) pathways under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future.

MSDE appreciates the sponsor’s focus on creating clear, stackable credential pathways that provide Maryland students with tangible, industry-recognized credentials. These elements have the potential to strengthen career-connected learning and support student progression toward postsecondary success, complementing the State’s existing initiatives in this area. While the goal of strengthening alignment between secondary education, workforce needs, and credential attainment is consistent with the State’s ongoing priorities, several considerations related to statutory authority, duplication of effort, and existing policy frameworks should be noted.

As written, the bill assigns responsibility to MSDE and the CTE Committee to review and make recommendations regarding graduation-related requirements. The review and modification of statewide high school curriculum requirements and graduation requirements fall under the statutory authority of the Maryland State Board of Education. Additionally, several provisions of the bill duplicate work that is already underway through existing statutory, regulatory, and policy processes:

- **Individual Student Graduation Planning** - MSDE is currently implementing an individual student graduation planning process aligned with COMAR 13A.04.10.01, which requires the development of an individualized plan before high school and is reviewed annually. This work has been underway for the past year and is being led by the Division of College and Career Pathways as part of the implementation of post-CCR pathway planning.
- **Work-Based Learning Capstone Alignment** - The bill references exploration of capstone experiences that could substitute for certain senior-year coursework. This policy discussion is already underway within MSDE in coordination with the mathematics branch as part of ongoing work related to secondary mathematics pathway standards and course sequencing.

- **Existing CTE Committee Policy** - The bill also introduces provisions related to the approval and inclusion of industry-recognized credentials that may conflict with existing CTE Committee policy frameworks. Current CTE Committee policy establishes an annual review and approval process for industry-recognized credentials, which includes a formal evaluation process for credentials aligned with high-demand fields. Allowing credentials to be added on a rolling or quarterly basis by list managers, as contemplated in the bill, may create misalignment with the existing annual review structure established by the CTE Committee.
- **Related Work in Special Education** - The issue of stackable micro-credentials for students with disabilities is currently being explored through the Special Education Workgroup recommendations established in 2022. These discussions involve collaboration with the Maryland Department of Disabilities and disability advocacy organizations. While current CTE Committee policy does not recognize micro-credentials as equivalent to an industry-recognized credential of value, the topic is actively under consideration through our existing policy work.
- **Alignment with Current Executive Branch Priorities** - Many of the topics referenced in the bill, including post-CCR pathways, credential attainment, and workforce alignment, are already included within the State's performance priorities and are monitored through existing coordination structures, including the Governor's Jobs Cabinet and Education Cabinet.

It should be noted that formal evaluations and studies on many of the topics identified in this bill are already underway through established initiatives. These include work commissioned by the Accountability and Implementation Board through its contract with NORC, as well as work being conducted by the CTE Committee through its partnership with Jobs for the Future. Findings from these efforts are expected to be available to the Maryland General Assembly and may address many of the questions and policy considerations outlined in this legislation.

For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov.