

January 17, 2014

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FY 2015 State Budget Highlights

The amounts of education funding included in the Governor's proposed FY 2015 State Budget includes the overall investment of \$6.116 billion for both direct education aid (\$5.316 billion) and teacher retirement costs (\$800 million). Direct aid refers to the largely per pupil allocations for the major funding categories including the Foundation, Compensatory, Limited English Proficient, Special Education, and other programs. In FY 2015 Direct Aid is proposed to increase by \$125 million overall, with county-by-county amounts included in the documents provided below. The State Budget also includes \$4.3 million for Maryland Prekindergarten Expansion Program. A separate piece of legislation will be introduced to establish this program, and more detailed information is provided in an article below.

The Administration's FY 2015 capital budget allocates \$275 million for school construction. This amount is supplemented by \$6.1 million in Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program funding, and \$4.6 million in Aging Schools Program funding.

The Governor, through the Dept. of Budget and Management (DBM), publishes Budget Highlights (200 p.) as a comprehensive presentation of the State's operating and capital budget for the next fiscal year. The [Budget Highlights for FY 2015](#) is now available on the DBM website. The State Budget has been introduced as ([Senate Bill 170/House Bill 160](#)) and accompanying Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act ([Senate Bill 172/House Bill 162](#)).

The following information is excerpted from the Budget Highlights for ease of reference to the projected State investments in elementary and secondary public education overall and on a county-by-county basis.

- [Local Aid Highlights \(including Education\)](#)
- [Education Aid by County](#)
- [Teacher Retirement Costs by County](#)

Legislative Committee Calendar

- January 29, 2014 - MABE Legislative Day Luncheon in Annapolis (Miller Senate Building)
****Legislative Committee meets 10:00-11:00 a.m. on-site****
- February 10, 2014
- February 24, 2014
- March 17, 2014
- March 31, 2014
(Session ends April 7, 2014 - Sine Die)
- April 28, 2014 (Session Wrap-Up)

Meetings are held from 10:00 a.m. to Noon in the MABE office in Annapolis, unless otherwise indicated.)

Prekindergarten Expansion

Lt. Governor Anthony Brown's proposal to expand access to half-day and ultimately full-day prekindergarten is available on his campaign website, and is anticipated to be the framework for the \$4.3 million in the Governor's FY 2015 State Budget. The Lt. Governor's proposal calls for an initial investment of \$4.3 million and includes the following explanations of key provisions.

Why the Initial \$4.3 Million Investment?

Lt. Governor Brown's proposal would "Add 1,000 slots in pilot programs around the state that allow families with up to 300% of the FPL to enroll," and "Based on existing implementation and programs in other states, we estimate half-day Pre-K to average \$4,300 per student. This cost may vary based on how the program is implemented."

Regarding Implementation & Private Providers?

"Maryland's Preschool for All Business Plan recommended that the State continue to allow local school systems to contract with qualifying private Pre-K programs to provide the service, but some jurisdictions have chosen to offer the programs within public schools and others simply cannot find enough qualified providers to do anything else. Especially in the first years of this program, each local school district should be given the authority to determine how they want to implement this program. As best practices are developed, it may be appropriate for the Maryland State Department of Education to develop statewide standards for implementation by local school boards. Regardless of setting, certified teachers will provide the Pre-K instruction."

Capital Costs?

"In the short term there will not be any substantial capital improvements specifically for Pre-K. As the program expands, the State should increase construction funding by at least \$10 million a year in the capital budget."

- [Lt. Governor Brown's "Running Start: A Five Year Plan for Universal Pre-Kindergarten" Proposal](#)
- [MSDE Preschool for All Business Plan \(2009\)](#)

Common Core Legislation

Delegate Luedtke and Senator King have introduced [House Bill 117/Senate Bill 165](#), legislation to intervene in the Maryland State Department of Education's development and submittal of a renewed waiver application to the U.S. Department of Education. The waiver in question relates to waiving provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which means waiving provisions of federal law formerly known as the No Child Left Behind Act and focus instead on implementing the Common Core. Most controversially, the waiver being developed by MSDE will include commitments to USDE regarding student assessments and the use of assessment results to inform and influence teacher and principal evaluations as Maryland transitions from using the Maryland State Assessments (MSAs) to the PARCC Common Core assessments. In this context, the pending legislation would mandate the following:

"That the State Department of Education shall request a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education from specific provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that require the Department to administer the Maryland School Assessment in the spring of 2014. The waiver shall be requested within 15 days of enactment of this Act."

The bill further states:

“That if the State Department of Education has not received a waiver or a response from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) 2 weeks before the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is scheduled to be administered, the Department may not administer the MSA unless the Department determines that the penalty the Department would receive from USDE for not administering the MSA is more than the savings or benefits the Department would receive from not administering the MSA.”

House Bill 117 has been scheduled for a hearing on Feb. 5. More information on [Maryland's ESEA flexibility waiver](#) is available on MSDE's website

PARCC Assessments & School Technology

The Senate Education Committee held a briefing on school technology on January 15, 2014, which focused on MSDE's "[Report on Preparedness to Implement New Computer-Based Assessments](#)." This report was requested by the Joint Chairmen's Report following the 2013 legislative session. The committee received informative presentations from the Chief Information Officers from MSDE and the Baltimore County, Howard County and Carroll County school systems. The briefing provided a forum for legislators to inquire about implementation issues and costs associated with transitioning from the current statewide assessment program (MSAs and HSAs) that annually tests 301,000 students using on-line and paper assessments, to the new Common Core PARCC assessments which will involve administering more than 1.1 million online student assessments. State Superintendent Lowery clarified that the transition allows for the continued use of a paper version of the PARCC assessment through 2017. The presentations from the information technology experts from MSDE and local school systems emphasized that there is significant, ongoing progress toward building the fiber optic infrastructure to connect all schools, and the work to make each classroom a wireless learning environment. They highlighted include the need for hiring many more technology staff to service these networks once established in school buildings, and concerns with attention to procurement of not only devices but sustainability agreements to ensure servicing of the devices. The panel also devoted considerable time to discussing the need for state level involvement in procuring a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) that would benefit the full P-20 spectrum of school systems, community colleges and universities.

MABE Resources

MABE resources during session include the [GreenSheet legislative newsletter](#) and the [Advocacy](#) pages on the website. As session progresses, MABE will provide legislative updates and Calls to Action via the GreenSheet, and continuously update the website to provide all bill testimony and other resources, in order to facilitate the advocacy efforts of local boards and board members.

- MABE's [Annapolis Advocacy Center](#) features MABE [Bill Testimony](#), [GreenSheet](#) legislative newsletters, and [Calls to Action](#) on pending legislation.
- MABE's [Priority Issues](#) page provides more detailed information on MABE's top legislative priorities, and hot topics such as student discipline.

Also available on MABE's Website:

- [State Board Advocacy Center](#) and [Federal Advocacy Center](#)
- MABE's [Advocacy Toolkit](#) in PDF - MABE's [Advocacy Toolkit](#) is intended to complement board and board member efforts by providing a portable guide to assist in lobbying local, state, and federal officials on behalf of Maryland's outstanding public schools and students. Members can obtain a copy of the toolkit by contacting Sandi Barry, sbarry@mabe.org. For a hard copy of this publication, please contact the MABE office at 410.841.5414, or email Sandi Barry at sbarry@mabe.org.
- [The Monitor](#): MABE staff produces this newsletter on the State Board of Education's monthly meeting. Meeting handouts (regulations, memos, and briefing materials) are available on the MABE website.

- For any additional information regarding legislative matters, please contact John Woolums, MABE's Director of Governmental Relations at (410) 841-5414, (800) 841-8197, or jwoolums@mabe.org.

MABE's Annual Legislative Day Luncheon provides a forum for legislative leaders to share their perspectives and positions on education funding and policy issues and for local board members to advocate for MABE's legislative priorities. The President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, and education and budget committee chairs and vice-chairs present remarks, share lunch, and engage local board members in lively discussions. All members of the House and Senate are invited and many attend looking for their local boards and their input on pending bills.

MABE's Annual Legislative Day Luncheon

Sponsored by Senator Roy Dyson

Wednesday Jan. 29, 2014
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Miller Senate Building, Annapolis, MD
Pre-Luncheon Meeting for Legislative Committee Members
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Convenient parking at [Navy/Marine Corps Stadium](#)
Details of scheduled speakers to follow.
For additional information please contact
Tracy Oldaker, 410.841.5414 or toldaker@mabe.org



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