

AN ACT concerning

Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence

FOR the purpose of establishing a Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence; requiring the Commission to make recommendations to ensure the adequacy and equity in funding for students in public schools statewide, to ensure excellence in school systems and student performance, and to analyze whether the current funding formulas and procedures should be retained or modified; providing for the appointment of members of the Commission; providing for the staffing for the Commission; requiring a final report by certain dates; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) There is a Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence.

(b) The Commission shall review the current education financing formulas and accountability measures and make recommendations for:

(1) ensuring the adequacy of funding for students in public schools statewide;

(2) ensuring equity in funding for students in public schools statewide;

(3) ensuring excellence in school systems and student performance statewide;

(4) ensuring adequate and equitable funding for prekindergarten and other early childhood education programs;

(5) updating and enhancing the funding formulas established by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002; and

(6) ensuring adequate and equitable funding for programs and services mandated by federal and state laws and regulations.

(c) The Commission shall be composed of 27 members as follows:

(1) a chairman appointed by the Governor;

(2) the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House;

(3) two members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee appointed by the President of the Senate;

(4) two members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee appointed by the President of the Senate;

(5) two members of the House Ways and Means Committee appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(6) two members of the House Appropriations Committee appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(7) the State Superintendent of Schools;

(8) the Secretary of Budget and Management;

(9) the President of the State Board of Education;

(10) the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland;

(11) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

(i) a representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education;

(ii) a representative of the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland;

(iii) a representative of the Maryland Parent Teacher Association;

(iv) a representative of the Maryland State Education Association;

(v) a representative of the Baltimore Teachers Union;

(vi) a representative of the Advocates for Children and Youth;

(vii) a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland;

(viii) a representative of the Maryland Disability Law Center;

(ix) a representative of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges;

(x) a representative of the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education;

(xi) a representative of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce;

(xii) a representative of the Maryland Association of Counties;

(d) The Commission shall utilize multiple adequacy studies, in addition to the studies required by Chapter 288 of the Acts of 2002, as amended by Chapter 397 of the Acts of 2011, and Chapter 709 of the Acts of 2012;

(e) The Governor shall include sufficient funds in the State budget for the appropriate fiscal years to fund the adequacy studies approved by the Commission.

(f) To the extent practicable, the Governor shall attempt to ensure regional, ethnic, economic, and gender diversity on the Commission.

(g) The State Board of Education and the Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff support to the Commission.

(h) The Commission shall provide a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly by December 1, 2015.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 6 months and, at the end of December 2016, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.