

January 23, 2015

### In this issue:

- Upcoming Events
- Budget Updates
- MABE Briefings
- [Bill Report](#)
- [MABE Testimony](#)
- Links to Additional MABE Resources

### Upcoming Events

On January 26, the Department of Legislative Services will provide a comprehensive budget briefing for the House and Senate on the FY 2016 budget in the Joint Hearing Room at 3:00.

On January 29, MABE will hold the 2015 Legislative Day Luncheon. All boards and board members are welcome and encouraged to attend this year's Legislative Day. Invited speakers include Governor Larry Hogan, House Speak Mike Busch, Senate President Mike Miller, State Superintendent Lillian Lowery, and other legislative leaders. (Invitation included at the end of this GreenSheet.)

### Legislative Committee Calendar

- Session convened Jan. 14, 2015
- **2015 Legislative Day Luncheon – January 29, 2015, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** (Note: The Legislative Committee will meet before the Luncheon, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.)  
Invitation included at the end of this GreenSheet
- February 9, 2015
- March 2, 2015
- March 16, 2015
- March 30, 2015 (*not April 6!*)
- (April 13, 2015 – Sine Die)
- April 27, 2015 – Session Wrap-up

MABE's Legislative Committee meetings are held in the MABE office on Monday mornings, 10:00 to 12:00, unless otherwise indicated. Meeting agendas and materials are posted on the [MABE website](#).

### Governor Announces FY 2016 Operating and Capital Budgets

Governor Larry Hogan, inaugurated on Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, held a press conference on Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> to announce and provide some details about his proposed operating and capital budgets. On Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> the Budget Highlights book and three-volume set of Budget Books were released, providing much more detailed school system funding data. The education highlights [one-page summary](#) and [funding table](#) are available on the MABE website.

The operating budget includes more than \$5 billion in state aid to education, and a total of more than \$6 billion when education aid figures include the state's annual expenditure for teacher retirement payments. The Governor has emphasized his commitment to sustaining the state's investment in public education, and outlined a budget that maintains enrollment and formula-driven increases in spending. However, the

proposed budget would not provide the more than 1% inflation factor increase in state aid, while pledging to restore a 1% increase in FY 2017 and in future years.

The major exception to this overall approach is the reduction by half of the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI) program; a reduction in GCEI from \$132.6 million last year to \$68.3 million in FY 2016. This cut, which is at the Governor’s discretion given that GCEI is legally defined as a non-mandated program, severely reduces the state’s investment in this important program in the school systems included in the table below.

<b>FY 2015 Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI)</b>			
<u>County</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>		
Allegany	\$0	Harford	0
Anne Arundel	9,406,830	Howard	5,312,701
Baltimore City	22,862,898	Kent	136,857
Baltimore	5,727,153	Montgomery	34,394,095
Calvert	2,279,425	Prince George’s	39,276,765
Caroline	0	Queen Anne’s	563,799
Carroll	2,492,094	St. Mary’s	231,734
Cecil	0	Somerset	0
Charles	3,501,859	Talbot	0
Dorchester	0	Washington	0
Frederick	6,498,588	Wicomico	0
Garrett	0	Worcester	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$132,684,798</b>

**The Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI)**

GCEI is a discretionary component of the State aid formulas that provides additional funding to local school systems where educational resource costs are above the State average. Since funding for the program began in FY 2009, the State has provided funding through GCEI to 13 local school systems each year, and it has been fully funded each year since fiscal 2010. The FY 2015 budget included \$132.7 million for GCEI; and the FY 2016 budget should include \$135.6 million.

MABE believes that the GCEI is an integral component of the “Thornton” Commission’s recommendations, and essential to achieving the Bridge to Excellence Act’s mandate for adequate funding for all of Maryland’s students. The “Thornton” Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence recommended in its final report that “education funding should be adjusted to reflect regional differences in the cost of education that are due to factors outside the control of the local jurisdictions.”

MABE supports and will advocate for sustaining a robust level of public education funding in the FY 2016 State Budget, including efforts to restore the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI) to full funding.

**County-by-County FY 2016 Education Funding**

State education funding amounts per county are determined by the combination of factors including the GCEI cut, local wealth and its effect on the distribution of the foundation program, and student enrollment totals and the effect of enrollment of students in the compensatory education, limited English Proficient and special education funding categories.

The Budget Highlights book includes funding tables which provide categorical funding amounts for these categories and retirement costs. The table provided below is excerpted directly from the Budget Highlights, but does not include the columns showing retirement costs. The full table is in the Budget Highlights and also available on the MABE website.

**FY 2016 Primary and Secondary Education**  
 (\$ in thousands) – \*Retirement costs not included.

	<b>Foundation Program</b>	<b>Compen- satory Ed.</b>	<b>Special Ed.</b>	<b>Student Trans.</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total Direct</b>	<b>\$ Change from 2015</b>
Allegany	40,116	20,927	6,920	4,586	4,344	76,893	515
Anne Arundel	207,248	67,120	25,259	22,801	12,789	335,218	5,491
Baltimore City	413,670	317,851	69,390	19,504	55,825	876,241	-35,562
Baltimore County	372,401	142,193	47,946	29,834	20,016	612,390	19,053
Calvert	56,745	10,345	4,403	5,690	1,330	78,512	-3,144
Caroline	26,931	13,896	2,556	2,635	3,626	49,644	1,058
Carroll	93,880	14,370	9,676	9,658	1,806	129,389	-4,352
Cecil	62,670	21,752	7,652	5,062	1,830	98,966	-1,729
Charles	107,576	29,852	8,962	10,548	3,015	159,954	-1,347
Dorchester	21,517	11,364	1,663	2,463	2,660	39,667	2,342
Frederick	159,098	33,146	15,270	12,192	8,622	228,328	-3,432
Garrett	10,751	4,639	999	2,936	1,212	20,537	-128
Harford	134,485	33,251	18,837	12,451	2,737	201,761	-1,056
Howard	159,725	27,356	14,208	16,504	8,858	226,650	4,334
Kent	3,630	2,590	803	1,553	1,050	9,626	95
Montgomery	335,323	134,863	54,392	39,787	64,099	628,465	4,829
Prince George's	557,911	277,305	63,377	39,146	92,049	1,029,788	28,735
Queen Anne's	21,612	5,070	2,103	3,312	1,486	33,585	-212
St. Mary's	68,065	16,770	4,838	6,797	1,619	98,088	1,075
Somerset	13,311	8,758	2,243	1,855	2,399	28,566	177
Talbot	4,498	4,825	1,003	1,610	1,545	13,482	590
Washington	97,353	42,274	8,002	7,101	9,168	163,898	-1,320
Wicomico	69,876	39,539	7,355	5,242	10,456	132,468	3,916
Worcester	6,443	7,277	1,764	2,981	985	19,450	10
Statewide/Unallocated	0	0	23,926	0	26,390	50,316	-3,495
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,044,833</b>	<b>1,287,334</b>	<b>403,550</b>	<b>266,247</b>	<b>339,919</b>	<b>5,341,882</b>	<b>16,444</b>

Source: DBM Budget Highlights

MABE will continue to advocate for full funding for public education in the FY 2016 state budget, through the Appropriations and Budget & Taxation subcommittees and full committees hearing process, and with the vigorous advocacy of local boards and board members across the state.

Information will be updated on MABE's Priority Issues Page as the General Assembly deliberates on the Budget Bill (House Bill 70/Senate Bill 55), Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) (House Bill 72/Senate Bill 57), and Capital Budget (House Bill 71/Senate Bill 56).

## **The Capital Budget & Public School Construction**

The FY 2016 capital budget provides \$290.7 million for K-12 education projects. The capital budget includes \$280 million for the Public School Construction Program; \$250 million financed through General Obligation (GO) bonds and \$30 million financed through PAYGO expenditures.

The school construction budget includes \$6.1 million for the Aging Schools Program; \$4.6 million in Qualified Zone Academy Bonds; and \$6.5 million for a new academic building and dormitory at the Maryland School for the Blind.

## **MABE Leaders Brief House Ways and Means Committee on MABE Positions**

On January 20, MABE President Verjeana Jacobs, Legislative Committee Chair Joy Schaefer, and John Woolums presented a [briefing on MABE services and legislative positions](#) to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Committee Chair Sheila Hixson expressed her appreciation for the comprehensive briefing and committee members raised questions concerning MABE's position on postponing the start of the school year until after Labor Day, the technology tools needed to implement PARCC testing and Maryland's College and Career Readiness Standards, and MABE's process for determining legislative positions and priorities.

## **MABE and Panel Brief Senate Education Committee on Charter Schools**

On January 22, MSDE, MABE and local school system representatives, along with charter school parents, students and advocates briefed the [Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee](#) on the recently released Charter School Report and the status of Maryland's charter school program. State Superintendent Lillian Lowery and Carol Beck, MSDE's Director of School Innovation, briefed the committee on the state's charter school program, the numbers of charters in local school systems, and a summary of the recommendations in the recently released Charter School Study conducted by the University of Baltimore Schaefer Center. Ms. Beck emphasized that the recommendations included in the Study reflected the input researchers received from those they interviewed, and did not represent recommendations by MSDE.

Senators Paul Pinsky, vice-chair of the committee, and Ron Young, voiced serious concerns with the study's methodology and noted flaws they found. Senator Pinsky, for example, asked if the data reported for the reading and math performance of charter school students included the results for students attending charter schools which have been closed. The MSDE panel responded that those students' results were not included. Senator Young observed that it appeared more charter school operators and advocates were consulted than school system representatives, thereby making it predictable that the majority of input and recommendations would be aligned with advocates' positions. Generally, the committee members' questions reflected the same concerns raised in the Department of Legislative Services critique of the Schaeffer Center Study.

Next, the Committee heard from a panel including: Dr. David Stone, Vice-Chair of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners; Alison Perkins-Cohen, Director of the Office of New Initiatives, Baltimore City Public Schools; Kathy Lane, Director of Alternative Schools, Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Shauna Battle, General Counsel, Prince George's County Public Schools; and John Woolums, MABE. Mr. Woolums presented a brief overview of [MABE's testimony](#) in support for charter schools as public schools of choice, and the Charter School Act of 2003 as recognizing the role of local board of education governance of all public schools in their local jurisdictions.

Dr. Stone spoke to the success of Baltimore City's charter schools within the framework of the current law and the local flexibility it provides. He also noted that he was at one time the director of the school system's charter school program, and that his children attend a charter school. Ms. Perkins-Cohen highlighted the Baltimore City school system's diverse array of KIPP, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Arts focused and single-sex charter schools. In addition, she described the accountability and performance measures to ensure that charter school students are meeting or exceeding system-wide standards. Ms. Lane briefed the committee on the two successful charter schools operating in the Anne Arundel County school system, and their role as public schools of choice along with a broad offering of contract schools and STEM, International Baccalaureate (IB) and other magnet schools. Ms. Battle described Prince George's County school system's success in approving a growing number of charter schools, including replicating charter schools with proven models for success.

The Committee then received a briefing from a panel including Jason Botel, Executive Director of MarylandCAN: The Maryland Campaign for Achievement Now; James Estepp, Imagine Andrews Public Charter School Board President; Monica McClain, Afya Public Charter School teacher; Marie Parfait-Davis, Empowerment Academy Principal; and Wanda Parker, a KIPP Baltimore parent. Panelists described the positive experiences in their charter schools and the desire to see charter school opportunities expanded to make these opportunities available to more families and students.

## **MABE Resources**

**General Assembly:** MABE strives to be the primary voice for public education in Annapolis. The unity of 24 local school boards lends strength to our increasing importance in the legislative process, ensuring that the Governor, General Assembly, and State Board of Education turn to MABE to help determine what is best for school children.

MABE's Legislative Committee holds monthly meetings to guide the Association's lobbying activities in Annapolis, and invites policy and legislative leaders to exchange ideas. The Director of Governmental Relations, in coordination with MABE leadership, conducts direct lobbying activities including written and oral testimony before the General Assembly. MABE adopts and publishes an annual Legislative Positions publication and a Session Summary. MABE coordinates the Green Street Coalition, which is comprised of legislative liaisons from school systems and the superintendents association, and MABE staff pens the weekly GreenSheet update on legislative activity. For more information, go to MABE's [Annapolis Advocacy Center](#).

**State Board of Education:** In addition, MABE staff and members of the Board of Directors attend each meeting of the State Board of Education, and staff pens The Monitor, which provides a comprehensive summary of each meeting. MABE frequently informs the State Board of the Association's positions on priority issues through testimony, correspondence, and meetings. For more information, go to [MABE's State Board Advocacy Center](#).

**Federal Government:** MABE encourages all boards of education to engage in advocacy at the federal level to ensure that our federal officials are well informed on the priorities and perspectives of local school systems and the fiscal and policy issues arising under the myriad federal programs impacting public education. MABE's Federal Relations Network (FRN) Committee is comprised of board members appointed to represent the association in communicating NSBA and MABE positions to Maryland's federal delegation, including our two U.S. Senators and eight members of the U.S. House of Representatives. For more information, go to MABE's [Federal Advocacy Center](#).

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 Adelaide C. Eckardt

Thursday Jan. 29, 2015

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](mailto:toldaker@mabe.org)



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