MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PREPARING WORLD CLASS STUDENTS

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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August 29, 2016

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Warner I. Sumpter
President
Maryland Association of Boards of Education
621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401-1112

Joy Schaefer
Secretary and Ad Hoc ESSA Committee Chair
Maryland Association of Boards of Education
621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401-1112

Dear Brig. Gen. Sumpter and Ms. Schaefer:

I am in receipt of your letter dated August 16, 2016 regarding actions related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). I appreciate your support and partnership in working with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) as we collaborate with stakeholders to develop Maryland's ESSA Consolidated State Plan. I would like to respond to some of your recommendations and let you know the actions that we are taking and the process we have planned moving forward.

As you are aware, we have established an ESSA External Stakeholder Committee. Meetings are planned for this group to continue to meet through this 2016-2017 school year and we are committed to work with the Committee through the implementation year in 2017-2018. The membership of the External Committee has been expanded and now includes 31 members. The membership of the Committee is broad based and we ask that members of the Committee reach out to their constituency, sharing information and gathering input. We have met with more than 40 stakeholder groups and we have additional focus groups planned to gather input on recommendations. All input is shared with the seven subcommittees that are working to develop Maryland's draft plan.

Maryland has submitted input to the U. S. Department of Education on the draft Accountability regulations and will continue to share the needs of Maryland on behalf of our students as we proceed in this work. This input includes a recommendation to extend the implementation timeline. Although Maryland will abide by whatever decision is reflected in the adopted regulations, we share the same concern about the implementation timeline and agree that it should be the first year of implementation of the new accountability system (2017-2018) that should inform the identification of comprehensive and targeted support schools in school year 2018-2019.

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Additionally, we will continue to review and discuss possible dates for the submission of Consolidated State Plans.

MSDE applauds the creation of your Ad Hoc Committee on ESSA and looks forward to receiving any recommendations that are developed on issues pertaining to ESSA. Thank you again for your collaborative and important suggestions and recommendations to us.

Best Regards,

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

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