

April 25, 2023

On Tuesday, April 25, 2023, Board President Clarence Crawford convened the State Board's monthly meeting and was joined by Vice President Susan Getty, Chip Dashiell, Jr., Shawn Bartley, Gail Bates, Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Jean Halle, Joan Mele-McCarthy, Rachel McCusker, Lori Morrow, Warner Sumpter, Holly Wilcox, and student member Merin Thomas, from Wicomico County. The board also welcomed new member Joshua Michael.

[Link to April 25, 2023 meeting agenda, materials, and video.](#)

### **Public Comments**

Public comments were delivered by the following individuals: A parent spoke in opposition to the over-reliance on Chromebooks in classroom instruction and the lack of attention to classroom management and student behavior. Cheryl Bost, President of the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), highlighted the passage of the Educator Shortage Reduction Act, and concerns with the need to improve teaching conditions to improve teacher retention rates. Sharon Saroff, a special education advocate, raised concerns with the identification and instruction of students receiving special education services. Marsha Herbert, President of the Carroll County Board of Education, requested the State Board's assistance with Blueprint implementation and greater flexibility in the use of the Blueprint's restricted funding, citing her school system's outstanding student performance results being achieved notwithstanding the school system's reduction of over 300 positions in the past decade. Katie Ridgeway, Harford County School System Director of Strategic Initiatives, alerted the State Board to the budget proposed by Harford County Executive Bob Cassilly to reduce school system funding by \$19 million below the amount provided in the prior school year. She warned that such a reduction would directly impede the school system's ability to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation including raising teacher salaries, dual enrollment in community college, and other programs.

### **Consent Agenda**

The Board approved the consent agenda including personnel actions and budget adjustments.

### **Milken Awards**

The State Board and State Superintendent commended Melissa Salkeld who was selected as 2021 Maryland Milken Educator Award Recipient and Dion Jones who was selected as 2022 Maryland Milken Educator Award Recipient. The Milken Educator Awards, created by Lowell Milken in 1987, have rewarded and inspired excellence in the world of education by honoring top educators around the country with \$25,000 unrestricted awards.

The 2021 Milken Educator recipient, Melissa Salkeld, a kindergarten teacher at Prettyboy Elementary School in Baltimore County Public Schools, brings innovative practices to her classroom, with a strong focus on social and emotional learning (SEL).

The 2022 Milken Educator recipient, Dion Jones, a third-grade teacher at Fairland Elementary School in Montgomery County Public Schools, keeps students engaged by tailoring lessons and activities to their personal interests. Students work together to write a class newspaper featuring stories about each child.

## [Memo](#)

### 2023 Legislative Session Summary

Superintendent Choudhury and Justin Dayhoff, Assistant Superintendent for Financial Planning, Operations, and Strategy, briefly reviewed selected legislation passed by the General Assembly in the 2023 session. Mr. Choudhury began by outlining the Maryland Educator Shortage Reduction Act, and his disappointment that it was amended to not include a state funded “Grow Our Own” educator program to reflect the continued success of the programs being run in local school systems by virtue of the federally funded Maryland Leads grant program.

- **HB 1219 - Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023** This Administration bill establishes the Teacher Development and Retention Program as a pilot program to encourage college students to pursue teaching careers and makes a number of additional changes related to the recruitment and retention of teachers, including prekindergarten teachers, and school-based mental health professionals.

Mr. Dayhoff then highlighted bills requiring new departmental regulations for consideration and adoption by the State Board, including:

- **HB 206 - Early Childhood Education - Prekindergarten Programs - Montessori Schools and Programs** This bill establishes specific eligibility requirements for Montessori schools and Montessori programs under the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant program and the publicly funded full-day prekindergarten program in regard to staff qualifications and student-to-staff ratio.
- **HB 292 - Child Care Providers - Registration and Licensing – Exemptions** This bill exempts a family child care home, large family child care home, and a child care center from State registration and licensing requirements if the entity (1) serves only dependent children of military personnel and (2) is located on a military base or federal property or is certified as a child development program by a branch of the U.S. Department of Defense.
- **HB 448 - Early Childhood Education - Prekindergarten Programs - Montessori Schools and Programs** This bill establishes specific eligibility requirements for Montessori schools and Montessori programs under the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant program and the publicly funded full-day prekindergarten program in regard to staff qualifications and student-to-staff ratio.
- **HB 525 - Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program - Establishment** This bill establishes an Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The purpose of the pilot program is to license outdoor, nature-based early learning and child care programs.

## **School Profile: Salem Avenue Elementary School in Hagerstown, Washington County**

The State Board received an in-depth presentation from the school's principal, Thomas Garner, highlighting the school's community engagement and instructional strategies. Superintendent Choudhury introduced the presentation by emphasizing his interest in celebrating the schools that "punch above their weight" by achieving remarkable results in student performance relative to other similarly situated schools in terms of demographics. Nearly three quarters of Salem Avenue Elementary's students are economically disadvantaged and their enrollment is racially/ethnically diverse and yet outperform what the data predicts for the average school with a similar proportion of Economically Disadvantaged students. Specifically, Salem Avenue outperformed all 27 schools with similar percentages of Economically Disadvantaged students in ELA and all but one school in Math.

Principal Garner and his staff described the focus on student, family and community engagement including having staff visit the students in their homes. He noted the value of building one on one relationships with students, and the benefits in having a continuous focus on learning and supporting learning connections with home. He noted that the role of concentration of poverty grant funding to support After the Bell programs including tutoring, sports, arts, fieldtrips, and social emotional learning supports, and the availability of student transportation. As a community school, in addition to these wraparound services the school also offers a variety of summer camp programs. Principal Garner shared a photo of all staff and students forming the number 1323 (the school's street address) in a field to demonstrate that they are one team and one family.

[MSDE and School Presentations](#)

## **Blueprint Deep Dive: College and Career Readiness Exploratory Study Findings**

The Superintendent noted that one of the most important things the State Board will do this fall is to adopt a new college and career readiness (CCR) standard to replace the interim standard that was adopted when he arrived 2 years ago, and which is based on test scores under existing law. He described the current system as based solely on test scores as contrasted with the "or/or" approach of valuing test scores and GPA based on the findings that correlate these high school measures with success in 2 and 4 year colleges.

Matthew Duque, MSDE's Director, Office of Research, Planning and Program Evaluation, provided a comprehensive status report on the ongoing studies being conducted to inform the department's recommendations for new measures of college and career readiness. He reviewed the Blueprint for Maryland's Future required study and updating of standards, the status of the exploratory study and companion analysis, and the status of the long-term study.

The Blueprint calls for a clear definition of a college and career readiness standard and a system of assessments that ensure students are reaching their goals and receiving the support needed. Specifically, the Blueprint requires a new college and career readiness standard that allows graduates to succeed in entry-level credit-bearing college courses. The goal is for all students to meet the standard by the end of their 10th grade year. MSDE commissioned two research studies to define and verify the CCR standard:

- Exploratory Study: MSDE partnered with the Maryland Assessment Research Center (MARC) at the University of Maryland to complete a short-term quantitative study to explore the relationship between high school state and national standardized tests, and other potential predictors of success measured in high school (such as course grades), and success in postsecondary coursework and/or workforce outcomes.
- Long-Term Study: MSDE awarded a contract to a research organization to perform a deep content analysis to determine the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the first year at a community college or 4-year college or university in Maryland.

A student meets the current interim CCR standard if they meet or exceed the assessment standards in both English and Math. After the long-term research study is complete, the State Board will adopt a CCR standard that “enables the student to be successful in entry-level credit-bearing courses or postsecondary education training at a state community college.” Once adopted, “Each community college and other open-enrollment public institution of higher education shall accept for enrollment in credit-bearing courses any individual who has achieved college and career readiness according to the standard adopted by the State Board.”

Mr. Duque reviewed the exploratory study’s findings regarding the use of multiple high school level measures of student performance (GPA, SAT/ACT, MCAP tests) and their relationship to post-secondary success metrics (First year college GPA). In addition, to fulfill Blueprint requirements MSDE contracted with an external research organization, American Institutes for Research (AIR), to conduct an empirical study of the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to succeed in the first year of Maryland community college coursework. The research will be comprised of two different parts: a quantitative study and a content and standards alignment study. As specified in the Blueprint, AIR will submit their final research report to the Governor, the Maryland General Assembly, the AIB, and MSDE on or before September 1, 2023.

### [Presentation](#)

## **Reducing Overidentification and Narrowing Achievement Gaps Case Study: Lexington, MA**

Superintendent Choudhury introduced a briefing on the Lexington Public School system’s actions to reduce overidentification in special education and the success that effort yielded for all students during the tenure of former Superintendent Dr. Paul Ash. Dr. Ash joined the meeting virtually and provided a thorough presentation on the generally favorable indicators of wealth and student performance which masked a severe overidentification of African American students and assignment to special education programs and services. While African American enrollment was a small percentage of the school’s total enrollment, and most attended from outside the district through a program coordinated with the City of Boston (METCO), nearly 50% of these students were identified for special education. According to Dr. Ash:

“In 2007, 49% of African American/Black high school students were in special education, and, as a group, performed significantly below White and Asian students (based on state/national tests, high school grades, and academic levels). The METCO Director told the superintendent that she believed that most METCO students did not have a disability.”

Dr. Ash provided a detailed overview of the strategies employed to address and reduce not only the overidentification problem but also the related student achievement gaps. He cited three theories of

action as necessary components to reduce overidentification in special education and increase academic performance for all students:

- Creating a new professional learning model;
- Building collective teacher efficacy; and
- Supporting teacher leadership.

## [Presentation](#)

### **Calendar Waiver**

The State Board granted the Carroll County Board of Education's requested waiver of the 180-day school year requirement. Carroll County Public Schools has four inclement weather days (June 9, 10, 13, and 14) built into their calendar for the 2022-2023 school year. To date, Carroll County Public Schools has used one inclement weather day on December 23, 2022. Accordingly, the last day of the 180-day instructional requirement will be on Monday, June 12, 2023. Consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a), the one-day waiver will allow school to end on Friday, June 9, 2023. Action Request that the Maryland State Board of Education approve the request to waive one day of the 180-day instructional requirement for Carroll County Public Schools ending the 2022-2023 school year on Friday, June 9, 2023, at 179 days consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a).

## [Memo](#)

### **Regulations**

- [COMAR 13A.05.14 Adult High School Pilot Program – Permission to Adopt](#)
- [COMAR 13A.15.02 Family Child Care - Registration Application and Maintenance – Permission to Publish](#)
- [COMAR 13A.16.02 Child Care Centers - License Application and Maintenance – Permission to Publish](#)
- [COMAR 13A.17.02 Child Care—Letters of Compliance - Letters of Compliance Application and Maintenance – Permission to Publish](#)
- [COMAR 13A.18.02 Large Family Child Care Homes - Registration Application and Maintenance – Permission to Publish](#)

### **Board Opinions**

The State Board issued legal opinions for the following cases:

- *Christine Betley v. Queen Anne's County Board of Education*, dismissing the appeal for lack of jurisdiction regarding a local board ethics panel decision regarding an ethics complaint against a local board member.
- *Erin Bowling v. Harford County Board of Education*, affirming the local board's decision to uphold the superintendent's decision regarding the calculation of the employee's years of service.
- *Melissa Powell v. Baltimore County Board of Education*, affirming the local board and superintendent decisions regarding the employee's ineffective evaluation and non-renewal of her contract.

- *S.F. and K.F. v. Montgomery County Board of Education*, dismissing as not ripe for review the appeal regarding alleged bullying.
- *Mr. And Mrs. Stephan L. v. Montgomery County Board of Education*, dismissing as untimely the appeal regarding a student transfer.