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**Statement to the Maryland State Board of Education on the
Proposed College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards**

November 9, 2023

Thank you President Crawford and the state Board of Education members for your service to our students and communities. I am Michelle Corkadel, past president and current member of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education and President of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE). On behalf of MABE and the 24 local boards of education we represent, I am pleased to have this opportunity to share MABE's perspectives on the Maryland State Board of Education's (State Board) proposed standards for college and career readiness (CCR).

My three key points include: 1) MABE's strong support for local governance of curricular and assessment matters, 2) MABE's support for a CCR standard aligned with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future that maximizes opportunities for student access to challenging and rewarding CCR courses and programs, and 3) MABE's concern that the Blueprint funding to support CCR programs is critical to school system and student success yet lagging behind the mandates to revamp these programs.

The State Board is proposing to adopt CCR standards that would identify students as CCR if they earn a high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better **and**, in addition, meet one of the following standards: Either score proficient on both the English Language Arts 10 and Algebra I state assessments, or demonstrate math mastery by scoring proficient on the Algebra I assessment or earn a grade C or better in Algebra I.

This proposal is an alternative to the CCR standards recommended by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) study commissioned by the State, which would identify students as CCR if they earn a high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better **or** score proficient on both the English Language Arts 10 and Algebra I state assessments.

MABE requests the State Board's consideration of the following factors when making the final decision on adopting CCR standards so much more heavily weighted toward math proficiency than the proposal developed and recommended by AIR.

MABE, in accordance with our adopted legislative positions:

- Supports local decision-making authority in developing curriculum, assessments, grading policies, and instructional programs and the adoption of statewide laws and regulations reflecting a commitment to local governance, professional judgment of our local educators, and community engagement;
- Supports adequate state funding for mandated assessment programs, including required English/language arts, mathematics, science, government, and other tests and screenings required by law or regulations; and
- Opposes any efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum or testing matters inconsistent with MABE's adopted resolutions and legislative positions.

MABE strongly supports State and local board governance and administration of curriculum and assessments. MABE supports local decision-making authority in developing curriculum and assessments, in conjunction with the State Board, as we are the entities charged with the responsibility to research, investigate, and evaluate curriculum and assessments, and are ultimately accountable for student performance. MABE believes current state law, including the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, appropriately respects the State Board's role in setting the CCR standards and our local board responsibility to carry them out with fidelity.

The Blueprint is clear in setting the goal that students shall meet the CCR standard before the end of the 10th grade and no later than the time the student graduates from high school. It is the goal of the State that each student, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, gender, home address, socioeconomic status, or the language spoken in the student's home, shall have equitable access to college and career readiness and shall meet the CCR standard at an equal rate.

However, the CCR standards called for in the Blueprint are intended to be well-rounded, and are required to reflect the results of the empirical study contracted for by the MSDE. For example, the law references students meeting standards in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. In addition, the law emphasizes that the CCR standards are not intended to alter the need for high quality programs and content in fine arts, civics, physical education, and other

areas that are necessary to provide a holistic education and enable every student to be well-rounded.

The State Board's interim CCR standard for mathematics proficiency is more "well-rounded" than the one being proposed today, because it defines college and career readiness in math based on either a proficient score on the state Algebra, Algebra II, or Geometry assessment, or a score of 520 on the math section of the SAT. Again, this is not the approach recommended by the AIR Study or the State Board's initial proposal. In fact, state assessment results are cautioned against based on detailed analysis of student success rates in their college and career experiences. Specifically, the Study concluded that: "Relying solely on the test-based measures ... likely will result in misclassifying many students, and disproportionately, students from historically marginalized groups;" "The Maryland CCR standard should be flexible enough to support decisions that are tailored to individual student needs and aspirations;" and "Adding an alternative way to meet the CCR standard with high school grade point average (HSGPA) increased the percentage of students who meet the CCR standard and improved accuracy rates for predicting first-year college credits earned."

Lastly, MABE is very much aware that the State Board's adopted CCR standards have major impacts on Blueprint funding, which includes a mandated state and local share of per pupil funding for students achieving the standard to support the CCR programs we must provide. These include higher level courses (Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, etc.) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs (Apprenticeships toward industry credentials). The Blueprint also mandates that school systems provide individualized interventions and supports for all students not achieving the CCR standard, while also providing these students with continued access to the CCR programming described above. Importantly, these mandates take effect in advance of the provision of the Blueprint funding. These are enormous, transformational changes in the delivery of public education, and changes that MABE believes warrant as much flexibility as possible.

For these reasons, MABE urges the State Board to adopt CCR standards that provide an optimal amount of local school system discretion, based on the professional judgment of educators, to identify students as college and career ready based on GPA and/or a broader, more agile and

holistic set of factors that reflect each individual student's performance, progress, and potential to succeed in their college and career choices.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on the proposed CCR Standards and your consideration of MABE's input on this issue of critical importance to our students, families and the 24 local boards and their school systems striving to ensure college and career readiness for all students every day.