

MEETING OF THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the February 24, 2026 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on February 24, 2026, at 9:00 am in the State Board room located within the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The following Board members were present in the Boardroom:

Dr. Joshua Michael (Board President), Dr. Monica Goldson (Board Vice President), Dr. Kim Lewis, Mr. O'Marie Barnes, Dr. Irma Johnson, Dr. James Bell, Mr. Nick Greer, Ms. Marcy Leonard, Mr. Samir Paul, Ms. Nicole Murray-Lewis and Mr. Kenny Clash.

The following Board members were present virtually: Ms. Chuen-Chin Chang, Ms. Xiomara Medina, Mr. Chet Chesterfield, and Dr. James Bell.

State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Deputy Director Hannah Oakley, and Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

Dr. Michael called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Schoen declared that a quorum was present.

Dr. Michael opened the meeting by acknowledging Black History Month and Career and Technical Education (CTE) month. In a preview of agenda items to follow, Dr. Michael emphasized the importance of protecting instructional time, expanding career-connected learning opportunities, providing clear AI guidance for schools, and supporting a strong, stable, and diverse teacher workforce. Dr. Michael also stressed keeping schools safe so all Maryland students can learn and thrive amid recent immigration enforcement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

In-Person participation:

- Dr. Maria Trent, Johns Hopkins Medical School – Appropriate age health education
- Cara Grant, Advisory Council on Health and Physical Education – Health education standards
- Luam G. Kiflom – Student Led Health Council Montgomery Co. – Health Education

Virtual participation:

- Kathy Benson – Tequity4All – Artificial Intelligence Literacy and K-12 Computer Science Education
- Paul Lemle – Maryland State Education Association – Collaboration time, ESPs, accountability system
- Trish Brennan-Gac – Maryland READS - Coaching

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of January 27, 2026 Meeting Minutes
- Personnel Actions
- Budget Adjustments, January 2026
- Assessments for Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools (Permission to Adopt)
- COMAR 13A.03.08 Students at Risk for Reading Difficulties (Permission to Adopt)
- Prince George's County Public Schools Calendar Waiver Request
- Howard County Public Schools Calendar Waiver Request
- St. Mary's County Public Schools Waiver Request
- Calendar Modification - Granting Authority to the State Superintendent

ACTION: Dr. Michael requested Board approval of the consent agenda. Mr. Paul motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright began with an update on the Maryland Education Leadership Program, a professional learning program created by the Blueprint for board members, superintendents, and school leaders, noting that the first session focused on special education. Dr. Wright also shared that Maryland is featured in an XQ study entitled "The Future is High School: A Strategy for State Leaders to Accelerate Learning, Work, and American Renewal."

She additionally announced that NCS Pearson has been selected as the new assessment vendor as Maryland transitions to a new assessment system that will begin in the 2026-2027 school year. Dr. Wright added the new system will expand access for students with disabilities and multilingual learners as well as ensure educators have better data to inform instruction.

Dr. Wright provided an update on the legislative session and highlighted Governor Moore's State of the State in which the Governor spoke to the role of the Academic Excellence Program in strengthening instructional capacity and student success. The legislative session has also featured a series of budget hearings, briefings on the Blueprint and the Child Care Scholarship Program, as well as engagement with the Baltimore City Council. Dr. Wright highlighted an input session with superintendents from across the state on artificial intelligence, during which the Department shared key partnerships, reviewed the State Artificial Intelligence Cybersecurity Policy, provided updates on the K-12 Guidance on Artificial Intelligence, and discussed the development of the Artificial Intelligence Hub.

Lastly, Dr. Wright provided a review of School Calendar Guidance and the Waiver Process, outlining the requirements in COMAR 13A.03.02.12 and COMAR 13A.02.01.04(D), and shared additional resources related to immigration, directing the public to the Department's website page, "Support and Resources for Immigration Enforcement in Maryland Schools." Based on a

survey of superintendents in Maryland, two districts stated they are experiencing immigration enforcement at or near schools and three districts that stated that immigration enforcement is impacting enrollment.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) UPDATE - BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (BCPS)

Dr. Myriam Rogers, Superintendent of Baltimore County Public Schools, provided an update on her district, noting that over the past five school years, overall enrollment has declined while the number of economically disadvantaged students has increased by 116% and multilingual learners by nearly 50%. Dr. Rogers also reported a 1.7% increase in students receiving special education services, emphasizing that the intensity of support and services required has grown. Dr. Rogers highlighted key curriculum and professional learning initiatives, emphasizing efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism as a high-leverage strategy for improving student outcomes. She also noted that the county has the highest number of 5-star schools in the state, while raising concerns about dropout rates among multilingual learners.

Ms. Murray-Lewis asked about best practices for improving student outcomes and how to ensure staff investment. Dr. Rogers emphasized engaging all stakeholders, using evidence-based practices, maintaining a focus on high-quality instruction, and investing in professional development. Dr. Rogers also noted that feedback structures and advisory groups have helped strengthen staff buy-in. Dr. Johnson asked about the impact of the growing number of economically disadvantaged students on the district. Dr. Rogers explained that part of the increase reflects changes in how this population is defined and counted, and highlighted the district's expansion of community schools and social-emotional supports. Dr. Rogers also noted that the district has been a full Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) district for the third consecutive year. Mr. Barnes asked about parent engagement strategies, and Dr. Rogers highlighted the TalkingPoints technology that provides real-time translation services and credited the BCPS communications team that facilitated over 70 community conversations. Dr. Goldson underscored the importance of student attendance, commended Dr. Rogers for the district's attendance efforts, and congratulated her on receiving the Distinguished Woman in Leadership Award from the School Superintendents Association.

Dr. Wright presented Dr. Rogers with a citation on behalf of the State Board of Education and the Maryland Department of Education.

Ms. Donna Gunning, MSDE's Chief Financial Officer, provided an update on funding from the U.S. Department of Education, noting that Maryland has received the first significant allocation from the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program. She added that districts can now submit requests for reimbursement, with the process concluding at the end of March.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION: MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION (MABE)

Ms. Diana Hawley, President of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) and member of the Cecil County Board of Education, along with Mr. Milton Nagel, MABE Executive Director, and Mr. Sam Mathias, MABE Legal & Policy Director, provided an overview of MABE's services and priorities. They highlighted the organization's offerings, including legal support, professional development, peer group meetings, membership engagement, superintendent search assistance, and various insurance and retirement-related programs. Ms. Hawley noted that while roughly half of board seats are up for election or appointment every even-numbered year, MABE remains a member-driven organization. Lastly, Mr. Mathias emphasized MABE's commitment to ensuring that all board members have access to robust professional development opportunities.

Dr. Michael underscored that MABE plays a vital role, providing critical infrastructure and civic leadership that helps ensure local school boards remain strong and focused on improving student outcomes. Ms. Leonard asked whether MABE collects demographic data on Maryland board members, and Mr. Nagel responded that they do not. Dr. Bell asked about MABE's process for disseminating the School Law Deskbook. Mr. Mathias explained that while many districts purchase the book and MABE has a few copies available for distribution, it is not a revenue-generating initiative.

MARYLAND'S TEACHER WORKFORCE: SUPPLY, DEMAND, AND DIVERSITY (INFORMATION ONLY)

Ms. Kelly Meadows, MSDE Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Educator Effectiveness, presented a comprehensive overview of Maryland's teacher workforce for the 2025–2026 school year. As of October 2025, Maryland public schools employ more than 64,000 teachers. The workforce is 65.5% White, 22.1% Black, 5.1% Hispanic, and 5% Asian, with 76.9% female and 23.1% male educators. Additionally, 17.9% of teachers are considered inexperienced and 9.9% are conditionally licensed, with higher concentrations in high-poverty schools. Ms. Meadows highlighted continued growth in National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), which increased by 39% from October 2024 to October 2025 and now represent 4.9% of the workforce. While the data reflect progress in reducing vacancy rates and diversifying the workforce, it also underscore persistent staffing challenges, particularly in high-poverty schools.

Ms. Meadows outlined Maryland's teacher supply pipeline, noting that 20 in-state institutions offer 355 teacher preparation programs, alongside 12 approved alternative preparation programs. However, the number of program completers, both traditional and alternative, has declined in recent years. Alternative program completers tend to be more diverse. Ms. Meadows also noted that Maryland has historically been an "import state," relying on candidates prepared outside the state. Ms. Meadows also highlighted several improvements as overall teacher vacancies decreased by 45.3% in 2025–2026 compared to the previous year, with special education vacancies declining by 21.4% and elementary vacancies by 63.3%. The number of conditionally licensed teachers decreased by 1.8%, and the statewide teacher attrition rate

declined by 1.2 percentage points in 2025–2026. However, Ms. Meadows highlighted that attrition rates remain highest among Black/African American teachers.

Dr. Bell asked whether Maryland has benefited from federal reductions in force. Ms. Meadows confirmed that it has, noting that while the data does not fully capture the extent, programs in Montgomery County and several other districts have seen benefits. Ms. Murray-Lewis asked about the racial composition of NBCTs and whether there is data on student outcomes associated with NBCTs in Maryland. Ms. Meadows indicated she could share demographic data on NBCTs, but noted that Maryland has not yet studied their impact on student outcomes. Ms. Murray-Lewis also asked how the Blueprint is affecting the teacher workforce and vacancy rates. Ms. Meadows pointed to several provisions aimed at recruitment and retention, including raising the minimum salary, incentives for NBCT certification, incentives for teaching in low-performing schools, and the development of a teacher career ladder. Mr. Greer requested a breakdown of the teacher workforce by race and gender and suggested that MSDE consider guidance to support transitions from administrative and central office roles into classroom teaching.

Dr. Johnson asked how Maryland can produce more teachers, and Ms. Meadows emphasized the need to invest in Grow-Your-Own programs, highlighting an upcoming grant opportunity to support these efforts. Mr. Barnes echoed interest in additional data on NBCT demographics and asked whether teacher preparation programs are expected to continue producing fewer candidates, as well as why alternative certification programs tend to be more diverse. Ms. Meadows responded that MSDE is working to increase the number of teachers produced through preparation programs. Dr. Lewis underscored the importance of collecting more data on Grow-Your-Own programs and their potential benefits. Mr. Chesterfield asked whether there is data explaining higher attrition rates among Black/African American teachers. Ms. Meadows noted that this remains a critical area of focus and pointed to new induction regulations that may help address the issue. Ms. Murray-Lewis also asked whether licensure exams present a barrier to entering the profession. Ms. Meadows explained that while Praxis exams are one component of licensure and have raised concerns in the past, recruitment remains a more significant barrier. Ms. Leonard requested additional information on LEAs that may be outliers in successfully retaining specific teacher populations and could serve as models for best practices.

Dr. Michael concluded by highlighting significant progress in strengthening the teacher workforce, including reductions in vacancies and increases in NBCT certification and overall diversity. He also cautioned that the teacher pipeline continues to decline, noting that while the Blueprint raised expectations, it was not paired with a corresponding effort to expand the pipeline, underscoring the need for additional strategies to strengthen teacher supply.

CTE MONTH: APPRENTICESHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Richard Kincaid, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of College and Career Pathways, introduced an update on Maryland's apprenticeship and career-connected learning efforts, including key definitions and statewide enabling conditions for scaling apprenticeships. He then introduced representatives from Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) including

Joe Rose, Director of Workforce Development, Dede Keller, Director of Career and Technical Education, Valicia Beaty, Manager of Career Coaching, and Michelle Fadele, student intern, to present on the district's Career and Technical Education work. Ms. Keller began by outlining AACPS's strategic priorities, including a goal for 45% of students to earn an industry-recognized certification. Mr. Rose described the student pathway, which begins with career coaching and exploration in sixth grade and progresses to career concentration in 11th grade. He noted that with more than 140 apprenticeships and 679 interns, AACPS leads the state in career-connected learning opportunities. Ms. Fadele shared her experience as an apprentice in the AACPS Career and Technical Education office, highlighting the range of opportunities available and the skills she has developed. Ms. Beaty described a new course, Career Pathways, which allows students to explore personal interests and emerging career fields. Mr. Rose also emphasized that AACPS's career-connected learning model is iterative, using student data and workforce demand to continuously refine program offerings.

Mr. Barnes commended the AACPS team for their work and highlighted Ms. Fadele's contributions as a key driver of student engagement across the state. Ms. Fadele presented AACPS apparel to the State Board in celebration of CTE month.

CAREER COUNSELING UPDATE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Mr. Richard Kincaid, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of College and Career Pathways, presented an update on career counseling, highlighting the Blueprint's emphasis on coordinated advising systems and workforce-aligned experiences to support students in achieving meaningful postsecondary outcomes. He underscored the role of career coaches and advising teams in implementing six-year plans, describing them as the foundation of a strong advising system that aligns coursework, credentials, and career-connected learning with students' goals. The six-year plan provides a comprehensive, student-centered academic and career roadmap beginning in middle school and extending beyond high school graduation. Guided by COMAR (13A.04.10.01), it requires that each student develop an individualized academic and career plan before entering ninth grade and update it annually. Guidance and a career coaching professional learning program, developed in collaboration with the Maryland Workforce Association (MWA), are available. Mr. Kincaid concluded by noting implementation challenges, including integrating the plan into school environments, aligning support systems, and preserving local flexibility.

Mr. Barnes asked how schools are being encouraged to give students more autonomy. Mr. Kincaid responded that data will guide oversight, and professional development must be leveraged to ensure educators empower students. Ms. Leonard emphasized the importance of human capital, noting the critical role of school counselor-to-student ratios and the need for additional staffing support. Mr. Kincaid noted that Maryland has roughly 400 career counselors, some with large caseloads, and highlighted the need for systems that do not rely on a single staff member, in addition to increased funding. Dr. Bell asked whether community organizations are being incorporated into the development and monitoring of six-year plans and asked about the status of the MOU with state partners. Mr. Kincaid stated that MOUs are due by September 15,

2026, with a rolling review process beginning in October. Mr. Kincaid also emphasized the importance of leveraging all community resources to support six-year plans.

HOMEWORK REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Dr. Tenette Smith, Chief Academic Officer, and Dr. Elise Brown, Assistant State Superintendent of Instructional Programs, shared an update on homework guidance and recommendations. The guidelines are intended to support student learning while promoting balance, provide recommendations for LEAs, offer direction across grade levels and content areas, and allow flexibility based on local context and student needs. Dr. Brown explained that research on homework has yielded mixed results, showing limited benefits for younger students, as well as concerns related to increased stress, burnout, and equity of access, while demonstrating that homework can reinforce learning, particularly for older students. Accordingly, MSDE's guidance promotes homework aligned to High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and differentiated by grade level, ranging from 10–20 minutes per day for K–2 students to 90–120 minutes per day for high school students. Dr. Brown also highlighted the role of parents and guardians and emphasized the importance of clear communication from teachers and school staff.

Mr. Greer highlighted the importance of educator feedback, emphasizing quality over quantity in homework and the role of families as partners in student learning. He suggested that the guidance more clearly define support for families, including encouraging them to check materials for younger students and gradually release that responsibility as students become more independent. He also emphasized a preference for paper-based homework over technology. Dr. Bell asked MSDE to further address how homework can be equitable and to provide more detail on how artificial intelligence is considered within the guidance. Dr. Smith said that the guidance encourages LEAs to incorporate scaffolds and differentiated approaches to support student learning outside the classroom. Dr. Brown added that access to technology is an important equity consideration for LEAs when developing homework policies, and noted that additional guidance on artificial intelligence is in development. Dr. Bell also asked whether the guidance addresses grading homework. Dr. Smith said grading is not included, though some LEAs have policies already in place. Dr. Michael similarly asked whether homework should be graded for completion or accuracy, and Dr. Wright noted that grading practices are typically determined at the local level. Dr. Lewis clarified that the recommended time ranges are meant to cover the total amount of homework across all classes and emphasized the importance of coordination among teachers to ensure an appropriate workload. Dr. Johnson noted that some LEAs do not assign homework and expressed concern with grading homework, emphasizing it should primarily serve as practice. Ms. Leonard reminded the public that libraries offer homework support and online tutoring resources.

STATE BOARD ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn to an Executive Session. Dr. Lewis motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Dr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Greer and with unanimous vote convened in Conference Room #1, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present. Also in attendance were State Superintendent Carey Wright, Deputy Executive Director Hannah Oakley, and Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen and Jackie La Fiandra,. The Executive Session commenced at 12:40 p.m. and ended at 2:10 p.m.

The State Board reviewed and approved four Opinions and five Orders.

- *C.C. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – classroom request for twins
- *E.M. and C.M. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transfer
- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Michael Guessford* – (Board member removal request in Washington County)
- *J.B. and M.B. v. Montgomery* – student transfer/residency
- *David Klotz v. Howard County Board of Education* – no local board decision – OR26-04
- *M. N. v. Harford County Board of Education* – failure to exhaust administrative remedies – OR26-05
- *R.G. and E.G. v. Howard County Board of Education* – no local board decision – OR26-06

ORAL ARGUMENT I - THOMAS DEVELIN V. CARROLL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Elliot Schoen explained this case is an exceptions hearing requested by the local board regarding the administrative law judge's proposed decision and is being conducted consistent with COMAR 13A.01.05.07(F). Mr. O'Meally, representing the Carroll County Board of Education, claimed Mr. Develin's conduct qualifies as corporal punishment and cited previous State Board decisions including *Deborah Price V. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* Opinion No. 14-35 and *Sharon Brown V. Baltimore City Board of School Commissions* Opinion No. 9-31. Mr. Zavaro, Mr. Develin's lawyer, said the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) conducted a thorough evidentiary hearing and the County did not raise any exception to the ALJ's conclusion that termination and license revocation is not warranted.

Mr. Paul asked if any case law discusses physical struggles between an individual and an object. Mr. O'Meally noted that a "struggle" is typically understood as involving two individuals, and that intervention would not be necessary in the absence of multiple actors. Mr. Zavaro said the struggle in this case includes another person mediated by an object. Mr. Paul additionally asked whether there were prior incidents involving the student that would suggest less intrusive interventions would not have been effective. Mr. O'Meally said this student had documented behavior concerns and Mr. Zavaro said less intrusive interventions were used during this incident. Mr. Paul asked if there was a threat of serious harm, and Mr. O'Meally said no and Mr. Zavaro said yes. Dr. Bell asked if Carroll County Public Schools offer training on the restraint policy and Mr. O'Meally said yes, Mr. Develin had participated in the training. Dr. Lewis asked for clarification on how the original three-day suspension escalated to a termination. Mr. O'Meally said the Superintendent's recommendation was a three-day suspension and then the Carroll County School Board Hearing Examiner recommended termination. Mr. Chesterfield asked if

there had been any previous issues between Mr. Develin and the student. Mr. O'Meally said no. Ms. Leonard asked if the school completed the MSDE restraint and seclusion incident form and Mr. O'Meally said no, the school only made a report to the Department of Social Services. Dr. Johnson asked if the student had any injuries that required medical attention. Mr. O'Meally said no. Dr. Michael said there are four types of conduct listed as exceptions to physical restraint and asked Mr. O'Meally if any of the exceptions apply. Mr. O'Meally said no, none of the exceptions apply. Ms. Chang asked how many students were in the classroom, and Mr. O'Meally said there were roughly 50 students.

ORAL ARGUMENT II - KARLA HARRIS V BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

KAMIYA HARRIS, ET AL. V. BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS (CONSOLIDATED CASED)

Ms. Kavadi, representing Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, outlined the case and said the local board filed two motions, a preliminary motion to dismiss based on standing and a substantive motion for summary decision. The ALJ found that the local board's decision to close Edgewood Elementary School was not arbitrary, illegal or unreasonable. The local board seeks clarification from the State Board regarding whether current staff have standing to challenge a school closure. Ms. Petkovsek, representing the appellants, said the case should be dismissed on two matters, stating it is not timely and it does not have merit. Quoting the ALJ, Ms. Petkovsek said teaching is a non-fungible profession and there is real harm when a school is closed.

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Dr. Stefan Redding Lallinger, MSDE's Chief Policy Director, Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of the Office of Government Affairs, and Madeline Houck, Education Policy Analyst, presented six bills to the State Board of Education. This included two bills of support, including HB1582, the COMPASS Act, two bills recommended for support with amendments, two bills recommended for opposition, and eight bills suggested for letters of information.

Dr. Michael clarified that for HB1430/SB0960, Maryland Public Charter School Program – School Facilities – Funding, commensurate funding should be proportionate to what the state provides. Ms. Medina asked about the Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act, specifically whether an AI coordinator would be assigned to each LEA and if funding would be provided. Ms. Cratsley responded that each LEA would have a coordinator, but no funding is included.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to approve the Legislative Agenda. Dr. Lewis motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

COMAR 13A.04.18 PROGRAM IN COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION AND COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH FRAMEWORK (PERMISSION TO ADOPT)

Mr. Jason Semanoff, Director of Comprehensive Health and Physical Education in the Division of Instructional Programs, introduced the proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.04.18 Program in Comprehensive Health Education and the Comprehensive Health Education Framework. He noted that the recommendations were developed through consultation with parents, educators,

LEA leaders, and subject-matter experts, and align with national health education standards. Originally published on November 12, 2025, the draft received both verbal and written feedback from 625 respondents. Three updates were made to the framework, including revisions related to infectious disease control and substance use. Maryland's LEAs will continue to provide parents and guardians the opportunity to review instructional materials and to establish opt-out policies, guidelines, and procedures for instruction related to family life and human sexuality.

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee unanimously recommends permission to adopt.

Mr. Greer noted that this process reflects the strength of the democratic process, with public feedback capturing a range of perspectives, including dissenting voices, all of which are represented in the materials. He emphasized that the updates reflect the Board's position and continue to empower families as partners in student learning.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to adopt COMAR 13A.04.18. Dr. Lewis motioned, Mr. Paul seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

COMAR 13A.01.02.07 STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS REMOVAL OF A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT AND COMAR 13A.02.01.05 COUNTY BOARD REMOVAL OF A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Ms. Hannah Oakley, Deputy Director of the State Board of Education, provided an overview of COMAR 13A.01.02.07 State Superintendent of Schools Removal of a County Superintendent and COMAR 13A.02.01.05 County Board Removal of a County Superintendent. These new chapters establish procedures governing the removal of local superintendents by the State Superintendent and by local boards when initiating removal for the statutory reasons outlined in §4-201 of the Education Article.

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee unanimously recommends permission to publish.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to publish COMAR 13A.01.02.07 and COMAR 13A.02.01.05. Dr. Lewis motioned, Mr. Barnes seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

REVISIONS TO JOINT IMPLEMENTATION POLICY #4 - CAREER LADDER (PERMISSION TO ADOPT)

Ms. Kelly Meadows presented revisions to Joint Implementation Policy #4. Ms. Meadows explained that the amendments extend the Level Four pilot through the 2027-2028 school year and require LEAs to either participate in the pilot or implement an approved Level Four Career Ladder Plan in at least one school during that year. The policy provides implementation guidance for LEAs and partners piloting Level Four teacher roles, including models with less than 50% teaching time. This expansion will allow the AIB to gather additional data on the time needed for Level Four teachers to effectively carry out their responsibilities while maintaining a connection to the classroom.

Ms. Leonard clarified that a lead distinguished teacher must teach at least one course and may spend no more than 50% of their time in the classroom.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to adopt Joint Implementation Policy #4 - Career Ladder. Mr. Greer motioned, Ms. Murray Lewis seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

COMAR 13A.12.05.05 SUPERVISORS OF INSTRUCTION, ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS, AND PRINCIPALS (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Ms. Kelly Meadows noted that the following three COMAR items are related and began by outlining amendments to COMAR 13A.12.05.05, which establishes licensure requirements for assistant principals, principals, and supervisors of instruction across Maryland public school settings. She explained that when the regulation was repealed and replaced in November 2025, it was not intended to require educators holding historic Administrator I and/or Administrator II endorsements to meet the new requirements to remain in their roles. The proposed amendments clarify that these historic endorsements may be renewed and reinstated, allowing individuals to continue serving in their positions. Ms. Meadows also noted that the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) approved publication of these amendments at its January 8, 2026 meeting.

COMAR 13A.12.05.06 LIBRARY MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH) AND COMAR 13A.12.05.10 SUPERVISORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Ms. Kelly Meadows outlined amendments to COMAR 13A.12.05.06 Library Media Administrator and COMAR 13A.12.05.10 Supervisors of Special Education. Ms. Meadows explained that the purpose of these amendments is to realign language referencing the “Administrator” endorsement with the updated endorsement titles, Supervisor of Instruction, Assistant Principal, and Principal, found in COMAR 13A.12.05.05. She noted that these changes do not alter the requirements for the roles but simply update the terminology, and that both items were discussed together for clarity.

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee unanimously recommends permission to publish COMAR 13A.12.05.10, COMAR 13A.12.05.06, and COMAR 13A.12.05.05.

Dr. Johnson asked whether an individual holding an Administrator I endorsement automatically qualifies for an Administrator II endorsement. Ms. Meadows explained that it depends on the pathway through which the original endorsement was obtained, but if it was earned through a Maryland-approved program, the individual would automatically qualify.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to publish COMAR 13A.12.05.10, COMAR 13A.12.05.06, and COMAR 13A.12.05.05. Dr. Lewis motioned, Mr. Paul seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

STATE BOARD ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn to an Executive Session. Dr. Goldson motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Dr. Goldson and seconded by Mr. Greer and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 in Board Conference Room, 7th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present. Also in attendance were State Superintendent Carey Wright, Deputy Executive Director Hannah Oakley, and Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen. The Executive Session commenced at 3:50 pm. The Board reviewed the two oral arguments heard in open session. The Executive Session ended at 4:10 pm.

The Board reviewed the two oral arguments:

- *Thomas Develin v. Carroll County Board of Education* – tenured teacher termination
- *Karla Harris v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Kamiya Harris, et al. v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – closing of Edgewood Elementary School (consolidated cases)

AFTERNOON PUBLIC COMMENT

Virtual participation:

- Sharon Saroff – Special Education and Graduation

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE GUIDANCE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Mr. Richard Kincaid presented Maryland's K-12 guidance on Artificial Intelligence, highlighting resources for school systems as well as upcoming initiatives. MSDE developed a comprehensive, human-centered AI framework that establishes statewide guardrails while preserving local autonomy in tool selection and implementation. The guidance positions AI as a tool to support educational goals, keeping human relationships, professional expertise, and student wellbeing central. The guidance defines a clear statewide vision grounded in equity, transparency, privacy, accountability, and continuous improvement, clarifying roles and responsibilities across MSDE, LEAs, schools, educators, students, families, and vendors.

To support implementation, MSDE is releasing companion resources including a Local Action Planning Guide for LEA leadership, a Classroom Companion for educators, a District Policy Considerations framework, and a standardized AI Tool Evaluation Rubric for pilot approvals. Collectively, these resources create a coordinated governance structure that reduces fragmentation, mitigates risk, and enables thoughtful innovation aligned with the Blueprint, Digital Literacy and Computer Science standards, cybersecurity guidance, and civil rights protections. Looking ahead, MSDE plans to expand support with a K-12 AI resource toolkit,

professional learning opportunities, family and student modules, and monitoring and evaluation tools.

Ms. Murray-Lewis asked why the development of this guidance took longer than in other states. Mr. Kincaid and Dr. Wright explained that the process required extensive work and that it was important to take the necessary time rather than rush the guidance. Mr. Clash asked how MSDE plans to ensure accountability in the use of AI and how it will prevent AI from exacerbating the digital divide and existing inequities. Mr. Kincaid said that protecting student safety and privacy will be central to any AI policy, and that equitable implementation depends on district resources. Mr. Kincaid added that the guidance will help ensure all districts operate under the same parameters and have comparable access to information when developing and implementing their policies. Mr. Clash also expressed interest in the measurable impact of AI tools, and Mr. Kincaid noted that MSDE shares the interest despite the current limited data. Mr. Greer said that the guidance should more fully address mental health support and the potential impact of AI on students, and explicitly emphasize that AI should not replace cognitive development or critical thinking skills. He also recommended model procurement policies that limit automatic updates unrelated to security. Finally, Mr. Greer asked how the guidance will be reviewed and revised based on how LEAs implement it. Dr. Wright said we may need a working group with a host of stakeholders to get regular feedback. Mr. Barnes asked how MSDE is approaching the legal, equity, and privacy expectations and Dr. Wright described those measures as non-negotiables. Dr. Michael noted that the guidance lacks specificity regarding educator professional development.

STATE BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Dr. Lewis said Education Policy will meet March 12, 2026, and Mr. Greer said the Strategy and Operations meeting will meet March 11, 2026. Mr. Barnes shared he will be speaking at the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center in celebration of Black History Month.

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Elliott Schoen, MSDE's Assistant Attorneys General, announced the following opinions and orders:

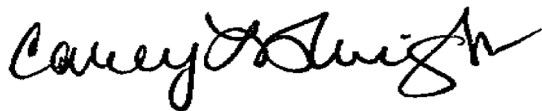
- *C.C. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – classroom request for twins - affirmed local board decision
- *E.M. and C.M. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transfer - affirmed local board decision
- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Michael Guessford* – (Board member removal request in Washington County) - state board did not find legal sufficiency to issue charges
- *J.B. and M.B. v. Montgomery* – student transfer/residency - affirmed local board decision
- *David Klotz v. Howard County Board of Education* – no local board decision – OR26-04 - dismissed
- *M. N. v. Harford County Board of Education* – failure to exhaust administrative remedies – OR26-05 - dismissed

- *R.G. and E.G. v. Howard County Board of Education* – no local board decision – OR26-06 - dismissed
- *Thomas Develin v. Carroll County Board of Education* – tenured teacher termination - reversed administrative law judge's decision and adopted the local superintendent's initial penalty
- *Karla Harris v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Kamiya Harris, et al. v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – closing of Edgewood Elementary School (consolidated cases) - affirmed administrative law judge's proposed decision regarding the closure of the school

STATE BOARD ADJOURN

Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Clash motioned, Ms. Murray Lewis seconded. (In Favor: 14, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 0).

Respectfully submitted,



Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Date: March 24, 2026

The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented. The video recordings of the meetings are the official record and can be located at:

<https://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/pages/meetings-2026.aspx>

Meeting materials, Opinions, and Orders can be found at:

<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/default.aspx>

The next Maryland State Board of Education meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 24, 2026**.

Appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Eight business days' notice prior to the event is required. Please contact Charlene Necessary at (410) 767-0467 or TTY at (410) 333-6442 so arrangements can be made.