

MEETING OF THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the May 28, 2026 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on May 28, 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, Mr. Nick Greer, Ms. Marcy Leonard, Ms. Nicole Murray-Lewis, Mr. Chet Chesterfield, Dr. James Bell, Mr. Kenny Clash, Mr. Samir Paul, and Dr. Peggy Carr were all present. Ms. Xiomara Medina was not present.

State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Director Zach Hands, 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 shared opening remarks and underscored Maryland's recent academic gains, as noted in the Education Recovery Scorecard. Dr. Michael additionally recognized Baltimore City Public Schools as a model for growth in both literacy and mathematics and congratulated Dr. Santelises, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools. Dr. Michael emphasized the importance of continued focus on teaching and learning, highlighted the Maryland General Assembly as a major partner, and reflected on the redesign of Maryland's accountability and School Report Card system.

PUBLIC COMMENT

In-Person participation:

- Paul Lemle, MSEA – Education Support Professionals
- Trish Brennan-Gac – Coaching
- Maya Gandotra – Financial Literacy
- Levi Bradford, Public Justice Center – Discipline Data and Disparities in Discipline
- Douglas Conrad, MD Music Educators Association – Arts Consideration for Blueprint Scheduling Policy

Virtual participation:

- Alicia Renee – IDEA and COMAR Noncompliance and Corrective Action
- Sharon Saroff – Special Education
- Rachel McGrain, AEMS – Math Policy

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of April 28, 2026, Meeting Minutes
- Personnel Actions
- Budget Adjustments, April 2026
- Montessori International Children's House Calendar Waiver
- COMAR 13A.01.05.12 Appeals to the State Board (Permission to Adopt)
- COMAR 13A.15 Educational Programs in Nonpublic Nursery Schools (Permission to Adopt)
- Somerset County Public Schools Calendar Modification Waiver Request
- Allegany County Public Schools Calendar Modification Waiver Request

ACTION: Dr. Michael requested Board approval of the consent agenda. Dr. Bell motioned, Dr. Lewis seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) UPDATE - CAROLINE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Derek Simmons, Superintendent of Caroline County Public Schools shared an update on behalf of the 24 superintendents and the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland. Dr. Simmons acknowledged Maryland's growth as reported in the recent Education Scorecard and highlighted MSDE's work to update state standards, strengthen assessments, and align the state report card to support statewide improvement efforts. Referring to Caroline County's designation as the "Green Garden County," Dr. Simmons emphasized the importance of early investments to cultivate future success. He also discussed the county's alignment of the instructional core, implementation of community schools and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, and strong academic outcomes that continue to exceed expectations relative to local funding levels. Dr. Simmons also highlighted efforts to align data systems and strengthen school culture, noting teacher retention as a key priority and recognizing the district's achievement of beginning the school year with zero vacancies. Lastly, Dr. Simmons discussed Caroline County's efforts to strengthen the implementation of its Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, noting that the district restructured its approach to better serve students with varying levels of need. He shared that these efforts, supported in part by the Stronger Connections Grant, have helped ensure that students receive appropriate interventions and services based on their needs.

Dr. Bell asked how long it took for growth to emerge following the implementation of the aforementioned initiatives. Dr. Simmons said that meaningful growth became evident after approximately three years, following improvements to the district's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and the accompanying data systems. Dr. Bell additionally asked if staff retention improved and Dr. Simmons said yes, retention has improved alongside instructional changes and a renewed focus on staff culture and engagement. Dr. Simmons reiterated that Caroline County continues to pursue further growth and improvement, with the goal of outperforming peer districts despite having comparatively lower wealth per pupil. Dr. Bell remarked that Caroline

County's experience demonstrates that funding alone is not sufficient and that effective systems must be in place to maximize the impact of available resources.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION

Dr. Michael introduced Maryland's 2026–2027 Teachers of the Year, reflecting on the vital role teachers play in supporting student growth and academic success. Drawing on his experience as a former educator, Dr. Michael emphasized the importance of teachers' daily commitment to building supportive learning communities and expressed the Board's appreciation for their service. Dr. Wright congratulated the Teachers of the Year and thanked educators across the state for their dedication to Maryland's students. Following opening remarks, MSDE staff provided instructions for the recognition ceremony and introduced the honorees.

- Elaine Davis, Allegany County Public Schools
- Joseph Bigsby, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
- Dr. Otis Eldridge, Baltimore City Public Schools
- Alison Benkovic, Baltimore County Public Schools
- Dr. Mary Macauley, Calvert County Public Schools
- Brittany Busick, Caroline County Public Schools
- Emily Brynes, Carroll County Public Schools
- K. Nicole Walker, Cecil County Public Schools
- Emily Leedy, Charles County Public Schools
- Cierra Robinson, Dorchester County Public Schools
- Alicia Souder, Frederick County Public Schools
- April Fleming, Garrett County Public Schools
- Michael James, Harford County Public Schools
- Kacy Valentine, Howard County Public School System
- Kevin Nelson, Kent County Public Schools
- Michelle Elie, Montgomery County Public Schools
- Clara Allsup, Prince George's County Public School
- Alice Tickler, Queen Anne's County Public Schools
- Corey Bivens, Somerset County Public Schools
- Kinnon Williams, St. Mary's County Public Schools
- Holly Sump, Talbot County Public Schools
- Robin Papa, Washington County Public Schools
- Dr. Chelsea Taylor, Wicomico County Public Schools
- Kiersten Conway, Worcester County Public Schools

COMAR 13A.06.03 INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS IN THE STATE (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Mr. Andrew Warner, MSDE Director of the Office of Athletics, shared proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.06.03.01-11, Interscholastic Athletics. Mr. Warner explained that the recommendations resulted from an 18-month review conducted by the Maryland Public

Secondary Schools Athletic Association. The review incorporated broad stakeholder input through a statewide survey and a series of stakeholder task forces. Mr. Warner shared that the proposed amendments received unanimous support from both the MPSSAA Board of Control and the Public Schools Superintendents' Association of Maryland.

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee unanimously recommends permission to publish COMAR 13A.06.03 Interscholastic Athletics in the State.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to publish COMAR 13A.06.03. Dr. Bell motioned, Mr. Chesterfield seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

COMAR 13A.18.06-1, 13A.18.06, 13A.16.06.09-1, 13A.16.06.09, 13A.16.06.10, and 13A.16.06.10-1 CHANGE IN AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS - LICENSING (PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Ms. Sarah Neville-Morgan, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Early Childhood, introduced proposed amendments to the minimum age requirements for child care teachers. Ms. Neville-Morgan provided context for the proposed amendments, stating that the Maryland General Assembly enacted House Bill 662 in 2024, which lowered the minimum age requirement for child care teachers in large family child care homes and child care centers from 19 to 18 years old. The proposed amendments align existing regulations with State law.

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee unanimously recommends permission to publish COMAR 13A.18.06-1, 13A.18.06, 13A.16.06.09-1, 13A.16.06.09, 13A.16.06.10, and 13A.16.06.10-1 Change in Requirements for Teachers.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to publish COMAR 13A.18.06-1, 13A.18.06, 13A.16.06.09-1, 13A.16.06.09, 13A.16.06.10, and 13A.16.06.10-1 Change in Requirements for Teachers. Mr. Chesterfield motioned, Mr. Barnes seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

COMAR 13A.08.01.10-.10-01 STUDENT EXPRESSION (PERMISSION TO REPUBLISH)

Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Student Support and Federal Programs, presented revisions to proposed COMAR 13A.08.01.10-01 Student Expression, which would be added to COMAR 13A.08.01.10 Student Rights and Responsibilities and require each local education agency (LEA) to adopt a policy governing student expression. Ms. Gable shared that, following public comment, MSDE is recommending amendments to the version previously approved for publication, including the removal of requirements related to prior approval and appeals procedures for student expression activities. The revised regulation would require LEA policies to include statements on students' rights to expression, reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, limitations on certain forms of speech, and procedures for filing and investigating complaints. She further noted that the revised language would permit, rather than require, LEAs to prohibit activities of student expression that violate local school discipline

policies and regulations. Ms. Gable also shared that the proposed implementation timeline would be extended to the 2027–2028 school year.

Dr. Lewis shared that the Education Policy Committee engaged in considerable discussion regarding the proposed regulation and unanimously recommends permission to republish COMAR 13A.08.01.10-.10-01 Student Expression with the revised amendments.

Mr. Barnes expressed appreciation for MSDE staff and legal counsel for their work to strengthen the proposed regulation.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to republish COMAR 13A.08.01.10-.10-01 Student Expression. Mr. Barnes motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

FY2027 BUDGET REVIEW AND 2027 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP (INFORMATION ONLY)

Mr. Krishna Tallur, MSDE Chief Operating Office, provided an overview of the FY2027 enacted budget including the funding sources and the percent allocated to each division. Beginning with funding by budgetary units, Mr. Tallur said that MSDE's FY 2027 legislative appropriation exceeds \$12.5 billion, including approximately \$12.0 billion for Aid to Education, a 4.1% increase over the prior year. Mr. Tallur noted \$458.5 million is allocated to Headquarters operations and \$56.5 million is allocated to educational organizations that provide experiential learning opportunities. Mr. Tallur provided an overview of the funding streams supporting these appropriations, noting that federal funds comprise the largest share of Headquarters funding, while State general funds comprise the largest share of Aid to Education funding. Additionally Headquarters funding provides for 1,358.3 Full Time Employees (FTEs) with roughly half of employees in the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). Mr. Tallur explained that MSDE's request for additional positions was not approved but 0.4 FTEs was added to MSDE's budget in the Office of Attorney General to convert a part-time employee to a full time position.

Mr. Tallur highlighted several functions supported through Headquarters funding, including high-quality professional development opportunities for more than 64,000 teachers across seven content areas, training opportunities for approximately 6,400 school leaders and administrative professionals, and support for Maryland's child care system through 13 regional licensing offices serving more than 6,600 providers. He also highlighted several new and expanded initiatives supported through Headquarters funding, including \$14.1 million for the Academic Excellence Program to support the implementation of statewide standards and professional learning for LEA staff, as well as \$500,000 to support the Department's artificial intelligence initiatives. Mr. Tallur then provided a more detailed overview of Aid to Education funding, highlighting \$8.8 billion for major State education aid programs including \$37 million to expand access to publicly funded prekindergarten, \$250 million in federal funds supporting students with disabilities, \$471 million in federal funds supporting low-income students and educator development, \$551 million for

nutrition programs, and \$571.4 million in State and federal funding for the Child Care Scholarship Program. Mr. Tallur additionally highlighted continued Blueprint investments, including funding to preserve compensatory education and concentration of poverty supports for students and schools.

Mr. Tallur provided an overview of several pieces of legislation funded during the most recent legislative session, including the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program, which received a \$450,000 annual appropriation from FY 2028 through FY 2030, the Maryland Child Care Credential Program, which re-establishes \$5.687 million in annual funding over the same period, and the Maryland Public Charter School Program, which establishes a new State funding formula for charter school facilities beginning in FY 2028. He also noted the Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act, which requires MSDE to provide statewide guidance and implementation support for AI in education and includes a \$500,000 appropriation to support this work.

Ms. Laurel Cratsley, Executive Director of the Office of Government Affairs, provided an overview of several unfunded legislative mandates that would require new MSDE workstreams and implementation, including legislation establishing a statewide direct admission program for higher education beginning in SY 2028–2029, the Maryland Civic Excellence Program to support a Seal of Civic Excellence, and the Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act requiring local boards to adopt student electronic device policies by SY 2027–2028. She also highlighted additional requirements related to a model sexual abuse and misconduct response policy, participation in the School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact, immigration enforcement notification and guidance protocols, changes to State Board membership eligibility, and educator hiring transparency through participation in a national educator identification clearinghouse.

Dr. Michael said it was a successful legislative session and expressed appreciation to MSDE staff for their efforts to engage legislators and support the Department's priorities. Dr. Johnson asked for clarification on the definition of special funding. Ms. Neeta Gandhi, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, explained that special funding includes Blueprint funds, fees collected from teacher certification processes, private donor contributions, as well as other smaller funding streams. Dr. Johnson then asked about "super coaches" referenced in the Academic Excellence Program. Dr. Wright responded that "super coaches" serve as regional instructional leaders who provide oversight and support to instructional coaches, including facilitating monthly professional development. Dr. Carr asked whether international technology standards, including those from the International Society for Technology in Education, would be reviewed to inform the development of statewide artificial intelligence standards. Dr. Wright said yes, emphasizing the importance of drawing on best practices and aligning with relevant international frameworks. Mr. Barnes referenced SB 928, the Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act, and emphasized concerns related to equity in device policies, noting that in some local education agencies students are charged fees when devices are returned and raising questions about the affordability and quality of devices provided to students. Dr. Michael reaffirmed the significance of the 4.1% increase in appropriations for Major State Education Aid Programs and asked Mr. Tallur where the increase is directed and its impact on students. Mr. Tallur responded that the increase is distributed

across all State aid funding streams and indicated that a more detailed breakdown could be provided to the State Board.

ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL MAPPING (INFORMATION ONLY)

Dr. Wright provided context on the presentation and said the work has been a two year process with the general assembly to make the necessary changes, and said all the work comes through the Technical Advisory Committee and said the following presentation will outline the major decision points that will be upcoming. Dr. Wright provided context for the presentation, sharing that the effort reflects a two-year process undertaken in collaboration with the General Assembly to make necessary changes to the accountability system. She noted that the work has been guided through the Technical Advisory Committee and stated that the presentation would highlight key decision points that will require consideration moving forward. Mr. Geoff Sanderson, MSDE Chief of Accountability, shared the timeline of Maryland's accountability redesign efforts, beginning with the formation of the Maryland Assessment and Accountability Task Force in 2024 and culminating in the Maryland Accountability Advisory Committee's 2025 report to the State Board. He shared that the Committee's recommendations informed the introduction of House Bill 1582 and noted that the enactment of the House Bill 1582, or the COMPASS (Comprehensive Outcomes and Measures of Progress for Supporting Schools) Act, provides flexibility to redesign the Maryland School Report Card and implement key recommendations from the Task Force and Advisory Committee. Specifically, Mr. Sanderson highlighted key changes under the COMPASS Act framework, including counting "credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum" as a school quality indicator, adding a school staffing indicator among allowable school quality measures, limiting individual academic proficiency indicators to 20% of the overall score, and increasing the share of the system focused on academic measures, including student growth, from 65% to 70%.

Mr. Sanderson then presented a draft timeline of next steps for the accountability redesign process, noting that the schedule remains a working draft. Key milestones include reconvening the Maryland Assessment and Accountability Advisory Committee in July 2026, presenting MCAP results to the State Board in July 2026, and presenting Maryland Report Card ratings in October 2026, both of which will be presented to the Board earlier in the cycle than in prior years. He also noted planned Advisory Committee updates in December 2026, submission of ESSA plan amendments in February 2027, administration of the new Maryland System of Testing Academic Readiness (MSTAR) in Spring 2027 followed by standard setting in Summer 2027, and subsequent State Board presentations on MSTAR results and COMPASS-aligned Report Card ratings in Fall and Winter 2027.

Dr. Carr thanked MSDE staff for their work and support in bringing her up to speed, noting that the approach aligns with her expertise and expressing confidence that the work is proceeding appropriately. Dr. Carr asked for clarification on what is included in the academic indicators beyond the weighted growth score. Mr. Sanderson said that the academic indicators include student growth, proficiency, English language proficiency, graduation rates, and post-secondary

readiness. Dr. Carr asked whether MSDE has identified the weight of each indicator. Dr. Wright said that staff can provide a more detailed outline of the established components and identify the metrics that are undetermined. Dr. Wright added that, for example, the proposed school staffing indicator could include measures such as retention, turnover, and conditionally certified teachers, though the specific components have not yet been finalized. Dr. Michael further clarified that the General Assembly has adjusted statutory parameters to allow the State Board to provide final approval of the metrics in the fall. Mr. Greer said that ratings may evolve over time as the system is refined, emphasizing that the initial implementation may require adjustment. Mr. Greer additionally asked whether the 2026 Report Card would differ from prior versions, and Mr. Sanderson said no, it would reflect the final year of the current iteration. Mr. Greer asked about recruitment for the Accountability Advisory Committee, and Mr. Sanderson shared that the committee will include approximately 25 representative stakeholders. Mr. Greer expressed interest in ensuring parent representation. He further asked about barriers to paper-based assessments, and Dr. Wright responded that while paper options exist based on student need, fully paper-based assessments are significantly more costly than technology-based testing. Mr. Greer acknowledged the cost considerations while noting that technology-based assessments may encourage digital learning. Dr. Wright also clarified that students in grades K–2 do not participate in standardized testing. Finally, Mr. Greer raised concerns about a potential “honesty gap” between classroom grades and standardized assessment results and suggested incorporating assessment scores into report cards. Dr. Wright noted this has been a key area of discussion for the Advisory Committee, including how results are communicated and the role of formative assessments aligned to end-of-year measures.

Ms. Leonard expressed appreciation for the new formative assessments and asked whether school report card ratings would be normed on a curve. Mr. Sanderson responded that there would be no forced distribution. Ms. Leonard emphasized the importance of clearly articulating the purpose of the accountability system. Dr. Wright explained that its primary function is to identify how to best allocate resources and support schools in need of additional assistance. Ms. Leonard also stressed the importance of aligning accountability metrics with college and career readiness standards, state graduation requirements, and ESSA standards, noting that multiple overlapping targets can make it challenging for educators to prioritize resource allocation. Ms. Murray-Lewis asked how a “well-rounded curriculum” is defined. Mr. Sanderson responded that it is grade-band specific, with elementary and middle school measures including enrollment across core content areas as well as science and social studies MCAP performance, and high school measures including AP course participation, dual enrollment credit, and college and career readiness indicators. Ms. Murray-Lewis further asked what guidance would be provided to support schools with fewer resources, and Mr. Sanderson noted that technical assistance will be provided to help schools understand the metrics. Dr. Wright added that each school will also receive a detailed breakdown of its score.

Dr. Johnson asked for clarification regarding the proposed school staffing indicator to be added among school quality measures. Mr. Sanderson responded that several options are under

consideration, including teacher retention rates and conditional certification rates, as previously referenced by Dr. Wright, and noted that each potential indicator will be reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee to ensure reliability. Dr. Michael added that Board members will have additional opportunities to engage with staff as the indicators are further refined and emphasized that the State Board will ultimately take final action on the Committee's recommendations. Dr. Lewis stated that she will be looking for greater precision in the growth measure to ensure that students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and other students who may not follow typical learning trajectories are appropriately captured within the accountability metrics. Dr. Bell said he is interested in understanding how the data will be used to identify root causes of performance trends and inform targeted support for schools. Dr. Wright responded that technical assistance will be provided to support districts in analyzing the data and translating it into actionable next steps.

STATE BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Dr. Lewis said the Education Policy Committee will meet June 18, 2026 and announced Maryland is hosting the National Association of State Boards of Education at the annual conference October 26 - October 28, 2026. Mr. Greer said the Strategy and Operations Committee will meet June 17, 2026.

Dr. Michael recognized Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen during his final State Board meeting and expressed appreciation for his nearly three decades of service to the State of Maryland, including his tenure as Principal Counsel to the State Board and MSDE. Dr. Michael highlighted Mr. Schoen's guidance through major policy, legal, and organizational transitions, as well as his mentorship of future public servants, before inviting Board members to share remarks and presenting a citation in recognition of his service. Dr. Lewis shared remarks in appreciation of Mr. Schoen's service and reflected on the knowledge and guidance she gained from working with him. Mr. Paul, Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Clash each expressed appreciation for Mr. Schoen's service. Following a photograph, Mr. Schoen offered reflections, highlighting the opportunity to advance the mission of public education throughout his career. He expressed gratitude to the Board and staff, shared confidence that the Board would be well served by Mr. Dunklow, and briefly discussed his plans for retirement.

STATE BOARD ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn to an Executive Session. Dr. Bell motioned, Ms. Murray-Lewis 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. Bell and seconded by Ms. Murray-Lewis and with unanimous vote the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 in Conference Room #1, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present except for Xiomara Medina. Also in attendance were State Superintendent Carey Wright, Executive Director

Zachary Hands, Deputy Executive Director Hannah Oakley, and Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen, Jackie LaFiandra, and Alan Dunklow. The Executive Session commenced at 12:07 p.m. and ended at 2:05 p.m. The State Board reviewed and approved four Opinions and six Orders.

- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Colt Black* – Opinion No. 26-21. The Board declined to issue charges.
- *M.M. v. Carroll County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-22. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *Natasha White v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-23. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *T.H. and A.H. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-24. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *AutoFlex Fleet, Inc. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-11. The Board dismissed the appeal for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
- *E.M. and C.M. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-12. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.
- *L.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-13. The Board dismissed the appeal as moot.
- *S.C. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-14. The Board dismissed the appeal for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
- *S.P. and M.D. v. Harford County Board Education* – Order No. OR26-15. The Board dismissed the appeal as moot.
- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-16. The Board modified MSBE Op. No. 24-10.

Dr. Michael presented a Board Leadership update. The Board discussed personnel matters consistent with the Board's Governance and Operations Manual section G. Only the members of the Board participated in this part of the meeting.

The State Board returned from the Executive Session in a joint meeting with the Accountability and Implementation Board.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright shared a video highlighting her recent school visits across the Eastern Shore, noting that she has now visited all 24 local school systems in Maryland. Dr. Wright acknowledged Public Service Recognition Week and shared a video. Dr. Wright shared an update on the Prince George's County coaching pilot and announced that registration is open for the ACE Convening of literacy and mathematics educators to share best practices for high-quality instruction. Dr. Wright announced Ms. Sarah Neville-Morgan has been promoted to Chief of Early Childhood. Lastly, Dr. Wright recognized the legislative liaisons that supported the Government Affairs team during legislative session to advance MSDE priorities.

AIB UPDATE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Ms. Rachel Hise, Executive Director of the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB), provided an update on AIB initiatives including the Blueprint Comprehensive Plan and the corresponding public comment opportunities. Ms. Hise additionally shared an update on AIB Notice Letters and the AIB Advisory Committees. Advisory Committees are soliciting applications for new members to begin their terms in August 2026. Ms. Hise then shared an update on the Career Ladder Level 4 Pilots and noted LEAs are required to either implement Level 4 of the Career Ladder or a Level 4 Pilot for SY2027-2028 and must notify the AIB of their selected approach by July 1, 2026. Ms. Hise additionally noted publicly available resources on the AIB website including the LEA and Statewide Implementation Progress Highlight One-Pagers and a 2026 Legislative Wrap-Up.

Chair Leggett emphasized that the Career Ladder work is being carried out in close partnership with local education agencies to support successful implementation and adoption. He also expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnership with the State Board of Education.

EDUCATION SCORECARD (INFORMATION ONLY)

Mr. Geoff Sanderson, MSDE Chief of Accountability, provided background on the Education Scorecard and noted its relevance as an effort to track the pace of post-pandemic recovery. Mr. Sanderson explained the Education Scorecard links state test results for roughly 35 million grade 3-8 students in 2022-2025. Mr. Sanderson described the recent report and noted the recovery has been “U-shaped,” with larger improvements among the highest and the lowest income school districts in the country. All of the states which improved in reading between 2022 and 2025, including in Maryland, were implementing comprehensive “science of reading” reforms. The Education Scorecard found Maryland’s recovery ranks in the top five nationally in both reading and math and identified several LEAs in Maryland for unusual progress. Baltimore City, Frederick County, and Worcester County were recognized as “Districts on the Rise,” acknowledging their success across both reading and math. Anne Arundel County and St. Mary’s County were recognized for their growth in math and Dorchester County and Harford County were recognized for their growth in reading.

Chair Leggett and Dr. Kirwan congratulated the LEAs for their work. Dr. Kirwan additionally stressed the importance of sharing successes with Maryland families and asked how this year’s ranking compares to the previous year. Dr. Michael said Maryland was previously ranked 3rd in reading and 7th in math. Dr. Carr highlighted the value of the Education Recovery Scorecard as a measure of state progress and noted that her prior work with NAEP gives her confidence in the validity of the underlying methodology. She stated that Maryland should take pride in its results and reaffirmed the significant progress made by Baltimore City Public Schools. Member Werner noted the role of social media and technology in the historical data and asked whether one-to-one device policies have had an impact on student outcomes. Mr. Barnes asked whether chronic absenteeism data can be used to identify and elevate best practices across local education agencies.

ALIGNED METRICS (ACTION)

Mr. Geoff Sanderson, MSDE Chief of Accountability, provided an update on the progress of the aligned metrics work, a joint effort between MSDE and the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) to establish common measures for evaluating system and statewide progress. Mr. Sanderson noted that this work supports accountability and governance priorities and builds on alignment efforts initiated in 2024 across multiple strategic planning processes. Mr. Sanderson then reviewed the previously adopted aligned metrics, baseline data, and target-setting methodology, and highlighted updated targets for Grade 3 English Language Arts, Grades 3–8 English Language Arts, Grade 5 mathematics, and Grades 3–8 mathematics. Using 2023–2024 as the baseline year, targets were established to increase proficiency rates by five percentage points annually. While the State did not meet those targets in the most recent year, Mr. Sanderson noted improvement across each academic indicator. Workforce data showed similar progress, with gains in teacher diversity and stable retention rates.

Ms. Emma Pellerin, AIB Accountability Director, reviewed metrics adopted in September 2025 related to increasing educator certification in community schools, improving outcomes for identified student groups, and reducing achievement gaps across measures including kindergarten readiness and state assessments. Ms. Pellerin proposed one-year targets for the revised Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), including increasing the percentage of students meeting established skills levels in early literacy and mathematics. Additional aligned metrics remain under development pending future baseline data collection and include career ladder participation, student support staffing, and college and career readiness measures. Member Kirwan said that the targeted rate for the KRA appears low and asked whether the Blueprint establishes a specific goal for KRA outcomes. Ms. Hise responded that the overarching goal for all students is to achieve proficiency and explained that the KRA has undergone changes in its structure. Dr. Wright added that the 3% annual increase target for the KRA was established by the Technical Advisory Committee until additional baseline data becomes available. Dr. Michael additionally noted that many students are not served by the public system prior to taking the KRA. Dr. Carr asked which KRA assessment the State uses, and Mr. Sanderson said the KRA is from Renaissance Learning. Dr. Wright and Ms. Hise noted the need to disaggregate KRA data by provider type, and Dr. Wright further emphasized the importance of improving tracking of where students are coming from prior to kindergarten enrollment. Member Lynch asked about the allocation of support professionals and Dr. Wright said that the definition has been expanded to include all support professionals to better support LEA implementation, providing schools with greater flexibility given limited resources. Member Lynch asked for clarification on how teacher retention rates are calculated and whether retirements and teachers moving between districts are included in the measure. Mr. Sanderson confirmed that these factors are captured in the data.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a motion to approve the Aligned Metrics. Dr. Goldson motioned, Dr. Carr seconded. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 2)

STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHT: COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTATION (INFORMATION ONLY)

Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Student Support and Federal Programs, and Mr. Derek Anderson, Executive Director of Community Schools, presented an update on Maryland's Community Schools strategy and implementation progress. Ms. Gable emphasized that community schools are not a standalone program but a strategy for transforming how schools serve students and families through coordinated, community-based support. Ms. Gable shared that Maryland has expanded from 193 community schools in Fiscal Year 2020 to 720 community schools statewide, a 273% growth, with implementation across all 24 local education agencies. Ms. Gable reviewed the Blueprint funding structure, noting that designated schools receive a personnel grant to support positions including a community school coordinator and full-time health provider, followed by a per-pupil grant to support wraparound services based on student need.

Mr. Anderson outlined the State's approach to supporting community schools through compliance, capacity building, and connection. Community schools are required to complete annual reporting, including measures related to student supports and strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism, as well as conduct assets and needs assessments followed by implementation planning. Mr. Anderson shared that during the 2024–2025 school year, more than 305,000 students attending community schools were identified as needing one or more wraparound supports, including attendance interventions, enhanced learning environments, enrichment opportunities, and expanded access to counselors, social workers, and other student supports. Community schools collectively invested more than \$210 million in concentration of poverty funding during the 2024–2025 school year to support implementation of these services, with the largest investments focused on improving learning environments, student enrichment, and staffing supports such as social workers, mentors, and counselors. Mr. Anderson also shared ongoing efforts to build capacity and strengthen connections between state and local partners, supported by three new community school specialists serving as regional points of contact for community school coordinators. Lastly, Mr. Anderson highlighted LEA bright spots, including Allegany County's efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism, Baltimore City's citywide investments, and Dorchester County's academic growth.

Mr. Barnes asked how needs assessments are being updated as school needs evolve. Mr. Anderson responded that schools are encouraged to continuously review data and adjust implementation strategies as conditions change. Mr. Anderson additionally shared that the Community Schools approach has shifted from a focus on service delivery to a stronger emphasis on outcomes, with more intentional alignment of academic services. Member Kirwan asked how funding is allocated to schools based on the percentage of students living in poverty. Mr. Anderson said that funding is beginning to plateau and is now structured differently, with districts retaining a portion of funds at the local level while also supporting state-level

coordinators. Member Kirwan further asked whether schools with the highest concentrations of poverty are fully funded. Ms. Hise responded that they are not, and explained that the per-pupil grant is phased in based on years of participation in the community schools model, using a sliding scale that can be shared with Board members. Member Lynch emphasized the importance of collecting data that captures non-academic outcomes and the full range of student needs.

CTE JOINT VISION STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION (INFORMATION ONLY)

Mr. Richard Kincaid, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of College and Career Pathways, presented an update on implementation of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Joint Vision Statement adopted by the State Board, Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB), and the Career and Technical Education Committee of the Governor's Workforce Development Board. Mr. Kincaid explained that the implementation plan operationalizes the State's shared vision for CTE, advances Blueprint goals related to college and career readiness, and aligns with Maryland Momentum's Pillar Three focused on preparing all students to graduate college and career ready. The implementation plan establishes annual targets through 2031 and is intended to support expansion of registered apprenticeships and industry-recognized credentials while ensuring apprenticeship pathways are not displaced by alternative credential options. The plan identifies four primary areas of focus: expanding student access and awareness, improving coordination across state agencies, modernizing data systems, and increasing employer engagement. Mr. Kincaid highlighted six priority industry sectors that align with labor market demand and updated CTE programs of study, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, information technology, biosciences, and education.

Mr. Kincaid described MSDE's efforts to strengthen apprenticeship readiness through statewide implementation of redesigned CTE structures, industry-recognized credential approval processes, career-connected learning systems, and expanded scheduling flexibility. He noted that achieving the goal of having one in four college and career-ready graduates complete the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship will require increased employer engagement, reduced barriers for students, and modernization of data infrastructure. Mr. Kincaid emphasized that the primary challenge moving forward is employer capacity rather than student interest or school readiness. Data presented showed student demand for apprenticeship opportunities currently exceeds available placement capacity across multiple regions. Notably, LEAs are the single largest aggregate host of high school youth apprentices in Maryland. He clarified the distinction between youth apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships, noting that registered apprenticeships include formal wage progression, credential pathways, and continued employment opportunities and remain central to achieving Blueprint goals.

Member Lynch asked how are we engaging with the Department of Labor and industry partners to address the supply of apprenticeships. Mr. Kincaid explained that apprenticeship availability is influenced by employer staffing decisions and emphasized the importance of continued coordination across education, labor, and workforce systems. Member Kirwan asked how

Maryland's progress compares nationally and discussed whether other states have successfully implemented apprenticeship models at scale. Mr. Kincaid shared that while several states have expanded youth apprenticeship systems, Maryland's Blueprint establishes more ambitious targets. Member Werner noted concerns about supply and questioned how these programs remain sustainable once students are hired. Ms. Leonard noted that the Maryland Corps Service Year program is experiencing similar challenges related to employer participation and supply. Dr. Johnson asked how apprenticeships compare to dual enrollment. Mr. Kincaid responded that apprenticeship pathways are designed to intersect with dual enrollment, career advising, and broader efforts to create more flexible and integrated student learning experiences.

AFTERNOON PUBLIC COMMENT

In-person participation:

- Riya Gupta, Strong Schools Maryland – Blueprint for Maryland's Future
- Clarence Crawford – Literacy and Science of Reading Implementation

Virtual participation:

- Alita Geri-Carter – Special Education
- Frank Patinella, Maryland ACLU – Multilingual Learners

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Elliott Schoen, MSDE Assistant Attorney General, announced the following opinions and orders:

- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Colt Black* – Opinion No. 26-21. The Board declined to issue charges.
- *M.M. v. Carroll County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-22. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *Natasha White v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-23. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *T.H. and A.H. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 26-24. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *AutoFlex Fleet, Inc. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-11. The Board dismissed the appeal for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
- *E.M. and C.M. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-12. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.
- *L.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-13. The Board dismissed the appeal as moot.
- *S.C. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-14. The Board dismissed the appeal for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
- *S.P. and M.D. v. Harford County Board Education* – Order No. OR26-15. The Board dismissed the appeal as moot.

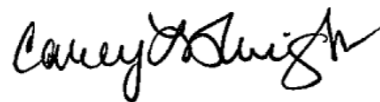
- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR26-16. The Board modified MSBE Op. No. 24-10.

Chair Leggett offered closing remarks, noting that community schools play an important role in addressing broader societal needs, while emphasizing the importance of creating long-term conditions in which those needs are reduced and such supports become less necessary over time.

STATE BOARD ADJOURN

Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barnes motioned, Mr. Clash seconded. (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 3).

Respectfully submitted,



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

Date: June 23, 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, June 23, 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.