



MARYLAND
Momentum 



STRATEGIC PLAN

Updated 2025

- MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

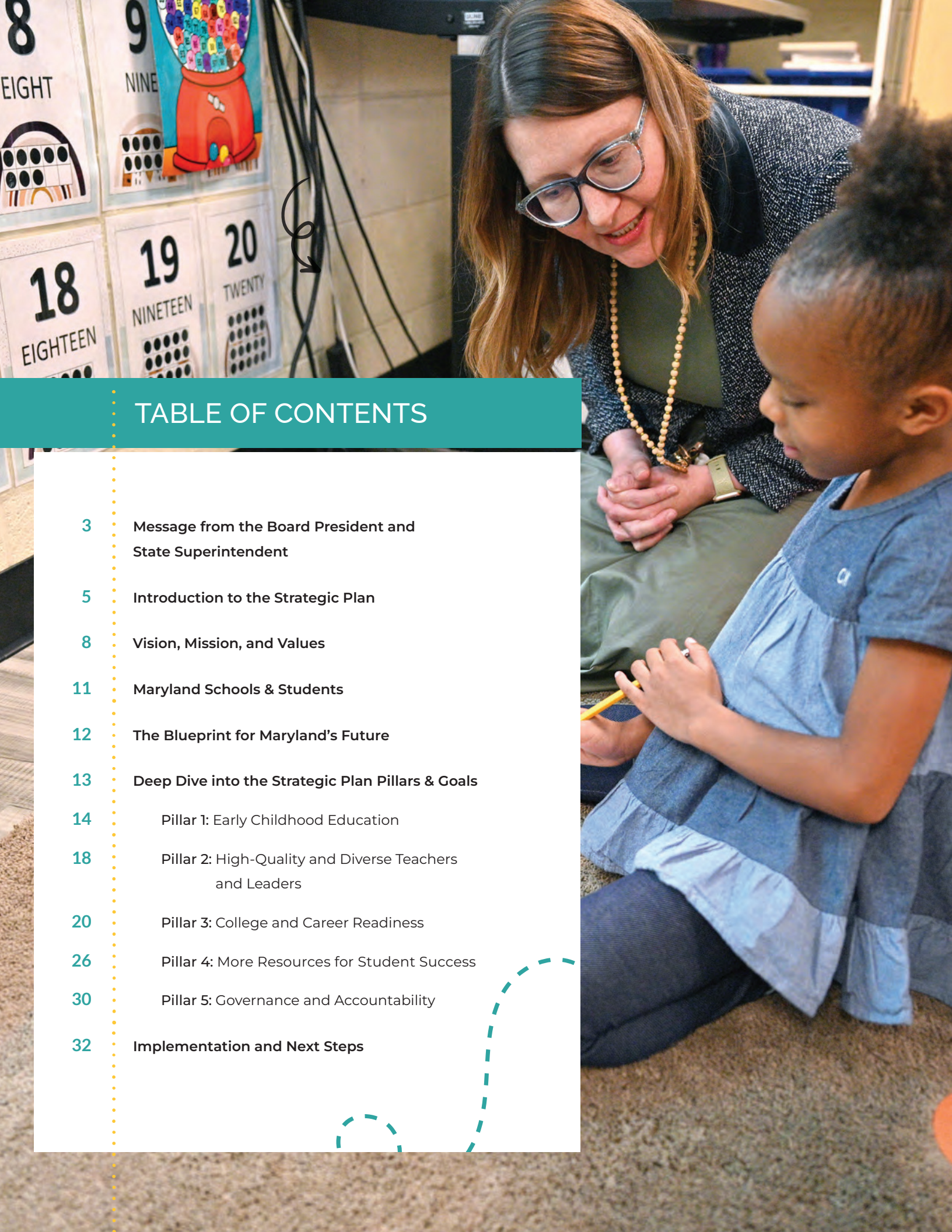


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MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT AND STATE SUPERINTENDENT

We are pleased to present the Maryland State Department of Education's Strategic Plan. Through strong decisive action, focused attention on core instructional priorities, robust collaboration, and support for teachers and school leaders, we believe that we can achieve our vision of building a world-class public education system.

The past few years have seen a number of important and meaningful changes and advances for public schools across Maryland. **For the third year in a row, we have seen performance increases for Maryland students.** We are continuing to prioritize ensuring strong core instruction in schools and providing the supports and conditions necessary to see improvements in student achievement. The work ahead remains critical to deliver results for our students and families. We recognize that while current academic achievement in Maryland is improving, performance levels indicate significant room for improvement – we know our students are capable of much more.

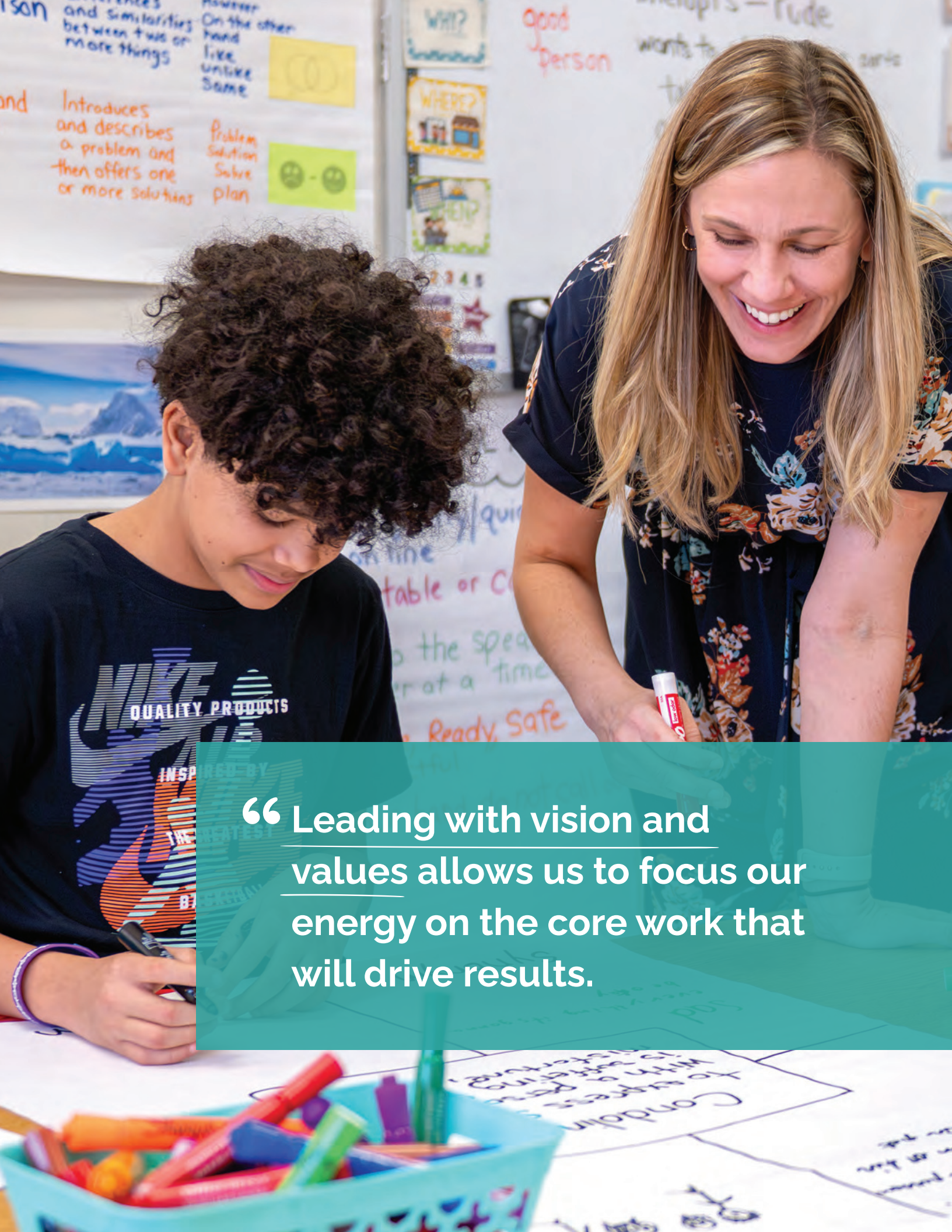
The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and its historic investments in public education present a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fulfill the promise of an excellent and equitable education for all children in Maryland. MSDE is committed to capitalizing on this opportunity to drive improved and equitable outcomes for children. We strongly believe fundamental shifts in instruction and accountability are needed to fully realize the promise of the Blueprint.

This Strategic Plan aligns our vision, mission, values, goals, outcomes, and strategies to the Blueprint's promise of an excellent and equitable education for every student. The Strategic Plan anchors the Blueprint legislation into the organizational fabric of our everyday work and embodies the aspirations that the people of Maryland have for our students. We detail a set of outcomes that will be monitored regularly throughout our internal work and shared publicly. The success of this plan, and the vision of Maryland's education system once again being the gold standard for all to see, requires the shared commitment of the whole community, including educators, students, school leaders, parents, families, advocates, and everyone else in between.

We look forward to your shared dedication and collaboration as we transform Maryland's education system into one of the best in the country and in the world.

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

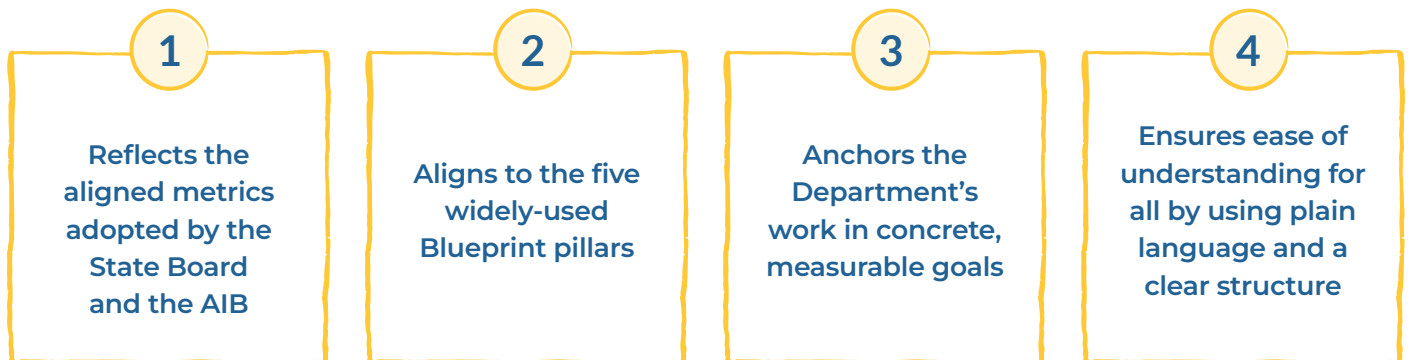
Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D.
President, State Board of Education



“Leading with vision and values allows us to focus our energy on the core work that will drive results.”

INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Board of Education's Strategic Plan anchors the vision, mission, values, outcomes, and strategies to realize the Blueprint for Maryland's Future promise of an excellent and equitable education for every student.



The Strategic Plan organizes the Department's core work by the five Blueprint pillars.

Within each pillar, there is a goal statement and a set of outcomes that are measurable goals that MSDE will work towards achieving.

Each outcome has a set of strategies identified by MSDE that will be the major programs and initiatives that will help the Department accomplish the outcomes and goals.



Throughout the Strategic Plan, a set of terms are used to anchor the work. These terms have the following operational definitions within this document.



Pillar:

Overarching theme from the Blueprint



Goal:

High-level aspiration



Outcome:

Concrete, measurable metric for tracking progress



Strategy:

Agency work aligned to the outcome

A STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS GROUNDED IN OUR COMMUNITY'S VOICES

MSDE made sure to elevate stakeholder voices in the development process. The newly adopted outcomes, goals, and structure were presented at public State Board of Education meetings throughout the spring and summer of 2025, allowing for public review and feedback.

MSDE received meaningful feedback from a number of community stakeholders and incorporated this into the final outcomes. Dr. Wright and MSDE leaders also gathered feedback from families, teachers, and principals through advisory councils.

Additionally, a feedback survey was shared with each Maryland school district and discussed with local superintendents. For every outcome presented, a majority of responses said that the outcome was aligned with the priorities of their LEA. Several outcomes were refined based on stakeholder feedback, and experts across MSDE reviewed each one closely. After the language was fine-tuned to ensure meaningful data measurement and alignment to MSDE priorities, baseline data was gathered for each outcome, or the timeline for future data collection was identified.



We gathered stakeholder perspectives and reviewed critical data and resources to identify current strengths and opportunities for improvement.



ADVISORY COUNCILS



PUBLIC FEEDBACK



FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES



TEACHERS & PRINCIPALS



LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS



FEEDBACK SURVEYS

MARYLAND IS WORKING TOGETHER WITH ONE CONNECTED VISION

MSDE's Strategic Plan contains a set of outcomes to advance the education system of Maryland. These outcomes work together with metrics from other statewide plans, including the Blueprint Comprehensive Implementation Plan from the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and Governor Moore's Moore-Miller Administration State Plan.

PLANS
DEVELOPED

Parallel efforts, shared purpose.

- Blueprint Statutory Requirements
- AIB's Blueprint Comprehensive Implementation Plan
- Moore-Miller Administration State Plan
- Maryland Accountability System (Maryland Report Card)

GOALS
ALIGNED

Maryland brings the plans together.

- Cross-plan review of goals
- Identification of shared priorities
- Aligned Metrics adopted by the State Board and AIB

IMPACT
ACHIEVED

One unified system driving student success.

- Greater coherence
- Clearer expectations
- Stronger student outcomes

OUR VISION

What We are Working Towards

We will be a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and life.

OUR MISSION

How We Will Get There

We will ensure a rigorous and world-class educational experience for every Maryland student, in every neighborhood, that prepares each to be college and career ready, through:



Strategic direction and leadership



Policy making and resource allocation



Engagement and advocacy

OUR VALUES

What Matters to Us

1

Accountability

2

Engagement

3

Equity

4

Excellence

5

Transformation







MARYLAND SCHOOLS & STUDENTS

Maryland has over 1,400 public schools in 24 local education agencies serving all of the state's 23 counties plus Baltimore City. Over the last 10 years, enrollment has increased by 3 percent. In school year 2025-26, over 890,000 students are enrolled in Maryland public schools from Pre-K to high school.

With a student population that consists of 32.3% Black/African American students, 31.4% White students, 23.7% Hispanic/Latino students, and 6.8% Asian students, Maryland's student population is becoming increasingly diverse.

In addition to the growing diversity in race/ethnicity, enrollment trends show an increase in the percentage of students who are Economically Disadvantaged and living in concentrated poverty. Maryland's student population also includes 14% of students who are Multilingual Learners and 13% who are Students with Disabilities.

1,400+

Public Schools

24

Local Education Agencies

890,000+

Pre-K to high school students

63,000+

Teachers

THE BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future was passed by the Maryland General Assembly and enacted in 2021 to transform public education in the state into a world-class education system.

The legislation presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fulfill the promise of an excellent and equitable education for all children in Maryland, especially those who have been historically underserved. The Maryland State Board of Education and Maryland State Department of Education are collaborating with local education agencies and boards, institutions of higher education, the Accountability and Implementation Board, employers, and stakeholders across the state to plan and implement the initiatives in each of the Blueprint's five pillars.

BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE



With sweeping policy changes designed to accelerate student achievement, and an unprecedented investment of state and local resources, the Blueprint creates the conditions for truly reimagining the education experience from early childhood to postsecondary success.



[LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE BLUEPRINT](#)

1

Pillar 1

Early Childhood Education

2

Pillar 2

High Quality & Diverse Teachers and Leaders

3

Pillar 3

College and Career Readiness

4

Pillar 4

More Resources for Student Success

5

Pillar 5

Governance and Accountability

A young girl with brown hair is smiling at the camera while sitting at a desk in a classroom. She has her arms crossed on the desk, and an open book is in front of her. In the background, other students are seated at their desks, some working on projects. The classroom has large windows and colorful decorations.

DEEP DIVE INTO THE STRATEGIC PLAN PILLARS + GOALS

Early Childhood Education



GOAL

Every child has access to a high-quality early childhood program.

Pillar 1 of the Blueprint and the Strategic Plan focuses on strengthening early childhood education by expanding access to high-quality prekindergarten programs and increasing support for families and young children. It aims to ensure that all children, regardless of income, race, or background, enter kindergarten with a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success.



OUTCOMES

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
1.A	Increase student readiness for kindergarten annually as measured by the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).	Anticipated December 2025	December
1.B	Increase kindergarten readiness proficiency rates for each student group.*	Anticipated December 2025	December
1.C	Decrease gaps in kindergarten readiness between student groups*.	Anticipated December 2025	December
1.D	Increase the count of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds from Tier 1 households (low-income, children with disabilities, homeless, or children from homes in which English is not the primary spoken language) who are enrolled in high-quality (EXCELS rating of 3+) full-day Pre-K.	1,410 students (2024-2025: 621 3-year-olds, 789 4-year-olds)	January
1.E	Increase the count of 4-year-olds who are enrolled in high-quality (EXCELS rating of 3+) full-day Pre-K.	826 (2024-2025)	January

*Student groups include: students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students attending Community Schools, economically disadvantaged students, race/ethnicity, and gender groups.



[VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)



STRATEGIES

Included below is a subset of the strategies that MSDE will use to accomplish the outcomes in Pillar 1. MSDE will continue to refine these and other strategies throughout the year to ensure responsiveness to the current needs of students, schools, and districts across the State.

Provide increased access to early childhood programs through a Mixed-Delivery System

comprised of private and public providers and ensure affordability by subsidizing the cost for families.

A Mixed-Delivery System is a model that co-delivers high-quality Pre-K in both private provider- and school-based settings through partnerships with child care centers, family child care providers, Head Start, faith-based providers, private schools, public charter schools, and college/university early learning centers.

Expand early learning hubs, such as Judy and Patty Centers, that utilize a Two-Generation Approach to ensure families are supported in the development of their children ages 0-5.

Judy Centers and Patty Centers are comprehensive hubs that leverage a Two-Generation Approach where families of children ages 0-5 can participate in learning experiences and receive support. The Blueprint expands Judy Centers to include nine new additional Centers each year over the next five fiscal years, and then doubles the expansion, as well as expands Patty Centers to include three new additional Centers each year over the next five fiscal years.



STRATEGIES CONTINUED

Refine Early Learning Standards that implement age-appropriate learning practices and materials, and foster high-quality learning environments for children's social, emotional, and academic growth.

Early Learning Standards describe the skills, concepts, and behaviors that young children in a high-quality learning and care environment typically learn before their fourth birthday. The standards promote the design and implementation of developmentally appropriate environments and learning experiences to support all children's development across different domains.

Provide data-driven, evidence-based professional learning and training, and technical assistance, including coaching, to early childhood education programs.

Evidence-Based Pedagogy: Science of Reading – Research from the fields of education, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, and neuroscience explains how individuals learn how to read and best practices for reading instruction. The foundation of literacy begins at a young age. Early childhood instruction of phonological awareness and vocabulary can prevent many reading difficulties in children.

Provide accessible multilingual family engagement resources and embed home language development supports for learning in Pre-K classrooms to promote early literacy and reduce readiness gaps for multilingual learners and children with disabilities.

Offer a free early childhood assessment system aligned to Maryland's early learning standards to monitor readiness and measure the quality of early learning programs to ensure academically and developmentally appropriate materials and resources are provided to support and empower educators to be successful.

Embed WIDA Early Years-aligned home language development practices in Pre-K programs to strengthen early oral language foundations that support later reading proficiency.

Offer opportunities for stakeholders (parents/students/constituents) to increase knowledge of local school system resources.



LEARNING THROUGH PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Children naturally learn through play by engaging in and making sense of their world. The best preschool programs take a “playful learning” approach, teaching early academic and social-emotional skills together through play and exploration. Studies have long found positive physical, social, emotional, and cognitive effects of play.

PRE-K ACCESSIBILITY & AFFORDABILITY

Under the Blueprint, income eligibility for prekindergarten enrollment is based on a system of tiers ranging from no cost, subsidized, to full cost Pre-K. The Maryland State Department of Education is implementing a sliding scale to offset the cost for families depending on their income. Maryland has also increased the income limits as well as the value of scholarships in the Child Care Scholarship Program to allow more families to qualify.





High-Quality & Diverse Teachers and Leaders



GOAL

Every school has high-quality and diverse teachers and leaders.

Pillar 2 aims to recruit, support, and retain a high-quality and diverse workforce of teachers and school leaders across Maryland. By improving compensation, establishing a career ladder that promotes educator growth, and expanding opportunities for collaboration and professional learning during the school day, the state is developing a strong pipeline of teacher leaders committed to delivering high-quality instruction to all students.



OUTCOMES

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
2.A	Increase the percentage of teachers with a professional license.	82% (2024-2025)	January
2.B	Increase the percentage of teachers retained over the last three years.	74% (2023-2024)	January
2.C	Increase the percentage of new teachers retained over the last three years.	64% (2023-2024)	January
2.D	Increase the percentage of new teachers of color.	46% (2023-2024)	January
2.E	Increase the percentage of teachers of color retained over the last three years.	70% (2024-2025)	January
2.F	Increase the percentage of school leaders of color.	44% (2024-2025)	January
2.G	Increase the percentage of fully licensed early childhood teachers.	35% (2024-2025)	May
2.H	Increase the percentage of teachers in Community Schools who are National Board Certified.	3% (2024-2025)	January
2.I	Increase the percentage of teachers participating at Level 4 of the career ladder.	Anticipated January 2026	January



[VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)



STRATEGIES

Included below is a subset of the strategies that MSDE will use to accomplish the outcomes in Pillar 2. MSDE will continue to refine these and other strategies throughout the year to ensure responsiveness to the current needs of students, schools, and districts across the State.

Develop a professional learning catalogue and engage stakeholders in discussions around needs.

Comprehensive professional development equips educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement evidence-based practices. Coaching provides ongoing support, allowing educators to refine their instructional techniques and receive personalized feedback. By providing training and coaching aligned with the Science of Reading, schools foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Conduct comprehensive reviews of educator preparation programs to ensure full alignment with state laws and regulations and strengthen overall program quality.

Support Grow Your Own staff programs to expand teacher and school leader pipelines, increase diversity to better align with student demographics, and address educator shortages.

Facilitate the implementation of revised guidelines for comprehensive educator Induction Programs for new teachers and school leaders to provide quality mentoring and support to ease the transition into the classroom.

Conduct a national teacher recruitment and outreach campaign.

Provide resources for conditional teachers seeking licensure through a conditional teacher toolkit, advertising financial incentives, and more.

Support local education agencies in expanding teacher and school leader career ladders that create greater opportunities for professional growth and collaboration, enhance compensation to attract and retain a high-quality and diverse educator workforce, and provide incentives for educators to serve in low-performing schools.

Open new pathways to licensure for career changers to increase the percentage of licensed teachers.

Implement and scale an MSDE-sponsored teacher apprenticeship program for individuals age 16 and older.

Facilitate the Maryland School Leadership Academy, which strengthens Maryland's leadership pipeline by expanding access to high-quality, job-embedded development and creating intentional pathways that attract, prepare, and support a diverse cohort of aspiring and seated school leaders.



TEACH MARYLAND

Teach Maryland is a key initiative to strengthen the educator workforce. Since 2019, Teach Maryland has promoted the benefits of careers in education through special events and initiatives aimed at students, career changers, and recently expanded to federal public servants.

College and Career Readiness



GOAL

Every student graduates high school college and career ready.

Pillar 3 establishes rigorous standards and clear pathways that prepare students to graduate high school ready for the next phase of their lives, whether pursuing higher education, entering a technical career, or joining the workforce.

Central to this vision is a realigned instructional system, with curriculum and assessments built on high-quality instructional materials, which guarantees that what students learn, how they are assessed, and what they are expected to achieve are consistently aligned with college and career readiness standards. A key focus is ensuring that all students demonstrate growth and proficiency in critical areas such as reading and mathematics, providing a strong foundation for success in their chosen pathways.



OUTCOMES

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
3.A	Increase the percentage of grade 3 students scoring proficient in reading.	46% (2023-2024)	August
3.B	Increase the percentage of grades 3-8 students scoring proficient in reading.	47% (2023-2024)	August
3.C	Increase the percentage of grade 5 students scoring proficient in mathematics.	29% (2023-2024)	August
3.D	Increase the percentage of grades 3-8 students scoring proficient in mathematics	27% (2023-2024)	August
3.E	Increase the percentage of grade 8 students scoring proficient in science.	25% (2023-2024)	August
3.F	Increase proficiency on all state assessments for each student group*.	*Additional data on page 24	August
3.G	Decrease gaps in proficiency on all state assessments between student groups*.	*Additional data on page 25	August

OUTCOMES CONTINUED

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
3.H	Increase the percentage of students demonstrating growth on statewide assessments at each grade level and in each student group*.	Once new accountability system is implemented	August
3.I	Increase the percentage of students who meet the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade in each student group*.	Anticipated Fall 2026	October
3.J	Increase the percentage of students who meet the CCR standard by high school graduation in each student group*.	Anticipated Fall 2026	October
3.K	Increase the percentage of students in each student group who complete at least one component of a Post-CCR Pathway, such as earning postsecondary credit, AP/IB exam with qualifying score, a career-connected learning experience, or an Industry-Recognized Credential.	Anticipated Fall 2026	November
3.L	Increase the percentage of high school students participating in the high school level of a registered apprenticeship.	Anticipated Fall 2027	November
3.M	Increase the percentage of Maryland students who graduate high school in 4 years.	88% (2023-2024)	February

*Student groups include: students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students attending Community Schools, economically disadvantaged students, race/ethnicity, and gender groups.



[VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)

STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEES



With the goal of improving student outcomes, MSDE established several Statewide Framework and Validation Committees (SFVC) comprised of parents, educators, school system leaders, and subject matter experts. Each SFVC works to align academic standards and curricular resources to support teachers in addressing the diverse needs, abilities, and interests of all students.

There were Statewide Framework and Validation Committees that looked at English language arts, mathematics, social studies, physical education, and comprehensive health education. Each of these made recommendations in 2025. In 2026, there will be SFVCs for world languages, comprehensive arts, and secondary mathematics pathways.

PILLAR 3 DEEP DIVE - COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS



STRATEGIES

Included below is a subset of strategies that MSDE will use to accomplish the outcomes for Pillar 3. MSDE will continue to refine these, and other, strategies throughout the year to ensure active responsiveness to the current needs of students, schools, and districts across the State.

Support skilled implementation of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) through clear guidance, school and district leader development, state coaches, and cross-district collaboration opportunities.

A High-Quality Instructional Material (HQIM) is a program of study, including tasks, texts, tools, and guidance, that teachers use to engage students in rigorous thinking and learning. HQIMs in Maryland are aligned to state standards, reflect instructional best practices, affirm student identities, and are designed to be responsive to student needs. Skilled implementation of HQIM across a system ensures equitable access to grade level content for all students.

Implement the evidence-based College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard that moves beyond standardized tests, and ensure equitable access to Post-CCR Pathways.

Training and coaching on evidence-based and highly effective reading pedagogy offered to all Pre-K through 3rd grade teachers, including special education teachers, administrators, and other relevant staff aligned to the Science of Reading and on evidence-based highly effective mathematics instruction.

Create and implement systems for progress monitoring to ensure all students are reading by the end of third grade and have the appropriate supports if still struggling with reading beyond third grade, as well as on track for access and success to Integrated Algebra 1 by ninth grade.

Develop guidance, training, and ongoing support for LEAs to implement literacy and math policy initiatives.

Support LEAs to develop systems and structures to consistently monitor student numeracy development and ensure access to appropriate math content in all grade levels, including intervention and acceleration when appropriate.

Increase the number of students earning an Industry-Recognized Credential or high school level of a registered apprenticeship.

Support every student in designing a personalized six-year graduation plan at the onset of high school through structured advising, career exploration, and academic planning sessions.

Develop guidance and support the use of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) with fidelity in all schools.

Support multilingual learners in meeting college and career readiness benchmarks by embedding English language development standards to guide integrated language instruction across content areas in grades 4–12.

Strengthen career advising by training counselors in labor market analysis, integrating career planning tools, and implementing structured advising protocols to ensure dual enrollment course selections align with high-wage, high-demand career pathways.



POST-COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PATHWAYS

Students have access to all pathways at no cost to themselves or their families. Career counseling programs will aid students in choosing a Post-CCR Pathway. Local education agencies must support students through the successful completion of Post-CCR Pathways in addition to supporting them in achieving College and Career Readiness as outlined in their individualized CCR plans.

COLLEGE PREP PROGRAMS

- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme
- Cambridge AICE Diploma Program
- A comparable program consisting of Advanced Placement courses specified by the College Board

EARLY COLLEGE AND DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

- An associate degree
- At least 60 credits towards a bachelor's degree

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS

- An industry-recognized credential or postsecondary certificate
- A registered apprenticeship program
- A youth apprenticeship program

ADDITIONAL DATA - 2023-24

3.F: PROFICIENCY ON ALL STATE ASSESSMENTS FOR EACH STUDENT GROUP

ELA PROFICIENCY BY STUDENT GROUP

STUDENT GROUP	PCT PROF 23-24
All Students	48%
Multilingual Learners	11%
Students with Disabilities	14%
Economically Disadvantaged	31%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	43%
Asian	74%
Black/African American	36%
Hispanic/Latino	32%
Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native	53%
Two or More Races	56%
White	65%
Community Schools	29%
Male	43%
Female	53%

MATH PROFICIENCY BY STUDENT GROUP

STUDENT GROUP	PCT PROF 23-24
All Students	24%
Multilingual Learners	6%
Students with Disabilities	7%
Economically Disadvantaged	11%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	20%
Asian	54%
Black/African American	12%
Hispanic/Latino	12%
Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native	25%
Two or More Races	30%
White	38%
Community Schools	11%
Male	26%
Female	22%

3.G: PROFICIENCY GAPS ON ALL STATE ASSESSMENTS BY STUDENT GROUP

ELA PROFICIENCY GAPS BY STUDENT GROUP

Relative to All Students

STUDENT GROUP	PROFICIENCY GAP
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5 percentage point gap
Black/African American	12 percentage point gap
Hispanic/Latino	16 percentage point gap

Relative to All Other Students

STUDENT GROUP	PROFICIENCY GAP
Multilingual Learners	42 percentage point gap
Students with Disabilities	40 percentage point gap
Economically Disadvantaged	28 percentage point gap
Community Schools	28 percentage point gap
Male	10 percentage point gap

MATH PROFICIENCY GAPS BY STUDENT GROUP

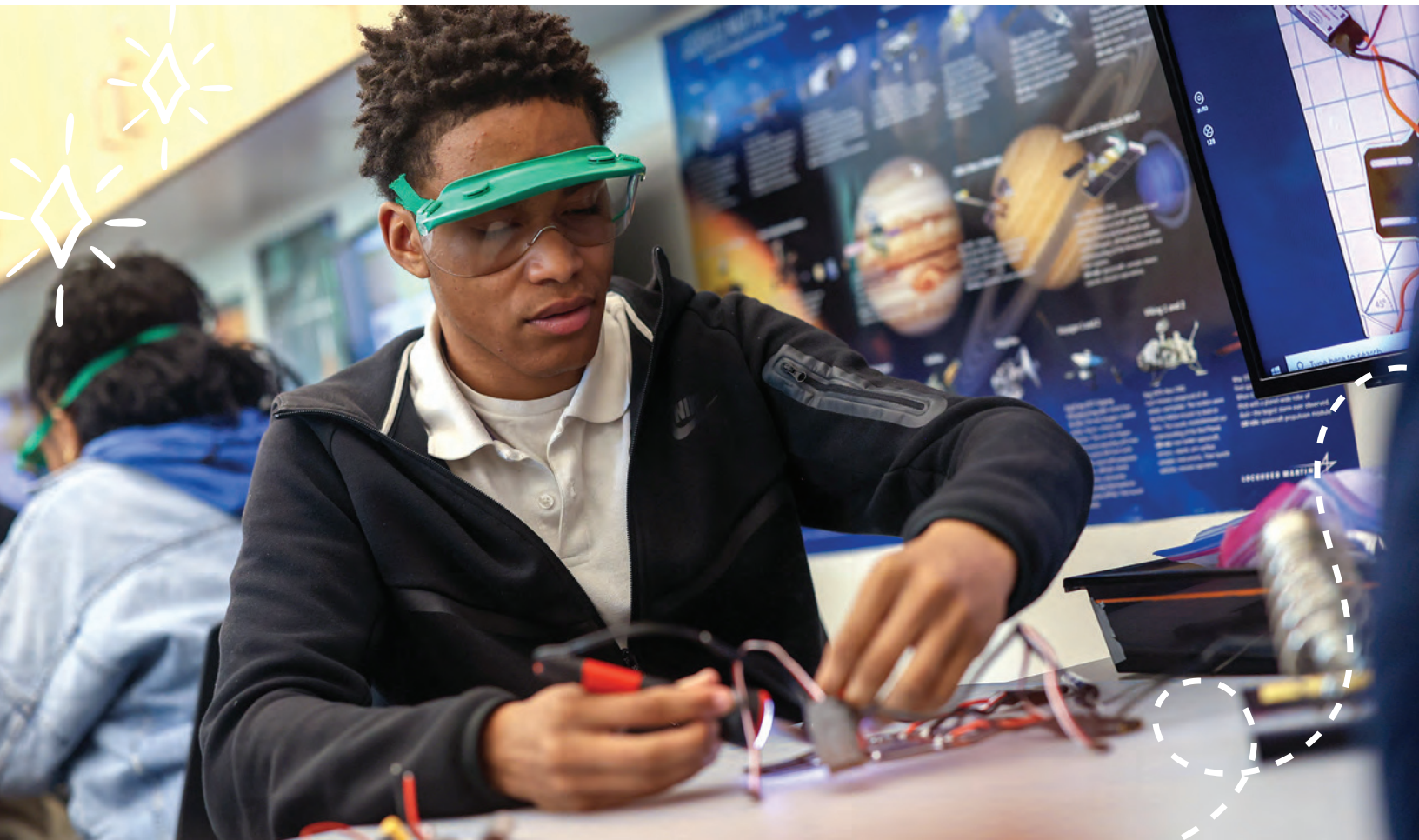
Relative to All Students

STUDENT GROUP	PROFICIENCY GAP
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4 percentage point gap
Black/African American	12 percentage point gap
Hispanic/Latino	12 percentage point gap

Relative to All Other Students

STUDENT GROUP	PROFICIENCY GAP
Multilingual Learners	21 percentage point gap
Students with Disabilities	19 percentage point gap
Economically Disadvantaged	22 percentage point gap
Community Schools	20 percentage point gap
Male	3 percentage point gap

Figures indicate the difference between the percent proficient for the student group and either 'All Students' or 'All Other Students'. Only student groups with a proficiency rate below the comparison groups are shown. All comparisons are based on SY 2023-2024 MCAP results.



More Resources for Student Success



GOAL

Every student is matched with the resources they need to succeed.

Pillar 4 ensures that Maryland schools have the resources needed to support every student's success. It focuses on expanded student support services, including counseling, mental health care, and strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism. Pillar 4 establishes Community Schools that partner with local organizations to provide comprehensive wraparound supports and create a supportive environment where all students can thrive and overcome barriers to learning.



OUTCOMES

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
4.A	Decrease the rate of chronic absenteeism.	30% (2022-2023)	October
4.B	Increase gifted and talented identification for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and economically disadvantaged students.	SwD: 5%, ML 3%, ED: 14% (Grade 10, 2024-2025) *Additional data on page 29	June
4.C	Reduce the percentage of LEAs with significantly disproportionate identification, placement, and/or disciplinary removal of students with disabilities by race/ethnicity.	Identification: 11 of 25 LEAs (44%) Placement: 4 of 25 LEAs (16%) Disciplinary Removal: 15 of 25 LEAs (60%) (2023-2024)	March

OUTCOMES CONTINUED

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
4.D	Increase the percentage of students with disabilities served in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) settings A and B, while reducing the need for placements in LRE C and separate schools for each race/ethnicity group, by disability identification category, and by type of assessment taken (i.e. MCAP and Alternate Assessments).	LRE A: 73.9% LRE B: 9.3% LRE C: 11.1% Separate Facilities: 5.5% (2024-2025) *Additional data on page 29	July
4.E	Increase the percentage of schools that have at least 2.0 FTE student support professionals (e.g. school counselors, social workers, school psychologists, student personnel workers, mental health professionals, career counselors, behavioral interventionists, etc.).	Anticipated January 2027	January

 [VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)



PILLAR 4 DEEP DIVE - MORE RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



STRATEGIES

Included below is a subset of strategies that MSDE will use to accomplish the outcomes for Pillar 4. MSDE will continue to refine these, and other, strategies throughout the year to ensure active responsiveness to the current needs of students, schools, and districts across the State.

Expand Community Schools and provide professional learning for Community School coordinators and staff to provide effective wraparound services that meet the needs of students and the community.

Enhance Tier 1 school-based mental health promotion services and supports to foster positive, social-emotional and behavioral skills for all students. Tier 1 activities are implemented school-wide, at the grade level, and/or at the classroom level, and services are delivered by both school and community-based professionals working within schools (e.g., school-wide mental health literacy; school climate improvement efforts; restorative practices; classroom-based social emotional learning for students).

Expand in-class instructional scaffolds (e.g., co-teaching, visuals, language objectives) in content areas to reduce achievement gaps for multilingual learners.

Utilize results from the Maryland School Survey to spotlight connections between student and educator perceptions of their schools and school achievement and other outcomes, while driving school level practices for improvement of student outcomes.

Provide professional development and support to LEAs to address root causes of chronic absenteeism (e.g. mental health supports, increased access to before and after school programs, and resources to families).

Increase the number of out-of-school time programs that offer socio-emotional programs.

Develop guidance for school teams to establish sustainable models for integrated systems of support.

Provide embedded coaching for elementary and middle school general educators and special educators to model effective inclusion strategies for students with disabilities and significant behaviors.

Scale the Maryland School Mental Health Response Program and strategic partnerships to support local education agencies in addressing student and family mental health needs by enriching the work of site-based student support services personnel through enhanced training and consultancies on mental health promotion and services (e.g., risk assessment; crisis stabilization; safe and supportive schools; linkages and triage; brief interventions).

Support the use of restorative practices to improve overall school climate and decrease chronic absenteeism.

Implement culturally and linguistically appropriate gifted identification methods (e.g., native language assessments, teacher training on multilingual learner giftedness) to increase multilingual learner representation in advanced programs.

Provide opportunities through the use of embedded artists, musicians, and academic content specialists in Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools to identify students with disabilities and multilingual learners with exceptional areas of talent.

ADDITIONAL DATA - 2024-25

4.B: GIFTED AND TALENTED IDENTIFICATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS, AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS.

STUDENT GROUP	GRADE 4	GRADE 7	GRADE 10
Students with Disabilities	5%	4%	5%
Multilingual Learners	4%	2%	3%
Economically Disadvantaged	11%	14%	14%

4.D: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES BY LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

RACE/ETHNICITY	IN GENERAL EDUCATION 80% OR MORE (LRE A)	IN GENERAL EDUCATION BETWEEN 40% - 79% (LRE B)	IN GENERAL EDUCATION LESS THAN 40% (LRE C)	SEPARATE FACILITIES	TOTAL STUDENTS
American Indian or Alaska Native	210 (73.43%)	24 (8.39%)	38 (13.29%)	13 (4.55%)	286
Asian	2,544 (64.23%)	449 (11.34%)	697 (17.60%)	271 (6.84%)	3,961
Black or African American	28,946 (67.94%)	4,902 (11.51%)	6,002 (14.09%)	2,592 (6.08%)	42,603
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	76 (67.86%)	10 (8.93%)	21 (18.75%)	5 (4.46%)	112
White	27,044 (80.21%)	2,346 (6.96%)	2,269 (6.73%)	2,043 (6.06%)	33,715
Hispanic or Latino	17,162 (76.85%)	1,855 (8.31%)	2,521 (11.29%)	785 (3.51%)	22,333
Two or More Races	4,559 (76.80%)	495 (8.34%)	551 (9.28%)	329 (5.54%)	5,936
Total	80,541 (73.93%)	10,081 (9.25%)	12,099 (11.11%)	6,038 (5.54%)	108,946

These 2024-2025 school year data sets include students eligible for and receiving services under an IEP who are in kindergarten through age 21. All LEAs, Maryland School for the Blind, Maryland School for the Deaf, and The SEED School are included in this analysis. The "Separate Facilities" category includes Home, Hospital, Public Separate Day, Private Separate Day, Public Separate Residential, and Private Separate Residential. Students in correctional facilities are not included in LRE A, B, C, or separate facilities, but are included in the total number of students.



Governance and Accountability



GOAL

Every school and district receives a rating of ____ or higher.

Pillar 5 focuses on ensuring that the Blueprint and Strategic Plan goals are met through transparent accountability and effective implementation. It establishes clear expectations, regular public reporting, and the use of expert review teams to provide targeted support and guidance to schools and districts seeking to enhance their performance. By promoting continuous improvement and engaging stakeholders, Pillar 5 helps build trust and drives progress toward equity and excellence in Maryland's education system.

The outcome statements and baseline data for Pillar 5 below will be finalized once the recommendations of the Accountability and Assessment Task Force have been implemented and the measurement scale of a revised accountability system are known.



OUTCOMES

OUTCOME ID	OUTCOME	BASELINE DATA	ANNUAL DATA AVAILABILITY
5.A	Increase the percentage of schools rated ____ or higher.	Once new accountability system is implemented	November
5.B	Increase the percentage of districts rated ____ or higher.	Once new accountability system is implemented	November



[VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)



STRATEGIES

Included below is a subset of strategies that MSDE will use to accomplish the outcomes for Pillar 5. MSDE will continue to refine these, and other, strategies throughout the year to ensure active responsiveness to the current needs of students, schools, and districts across the State.

Further develop the Statewide Finance and Data System to accurately measure and enforce accountability, collect and report new data, and advance public transparency and understanding of how State Aid calculations work.

Implement the recommendations of the Accountability and Assessment Task Force to build systems that better serve students, teachers, parents, school districts, and the greater education community.

Continue to evolve the Expert Review Team system to more accurately assess a school's math and literacy instruction, Blueprint implementation progress, and other key inputs and then provide feedback in a timely manner.



ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE

In February 2024, MSDE launched an Assessment and Accountability Task Force to better link school ratings to student achievement and promote equitable learning opportunities with a focus on literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking.

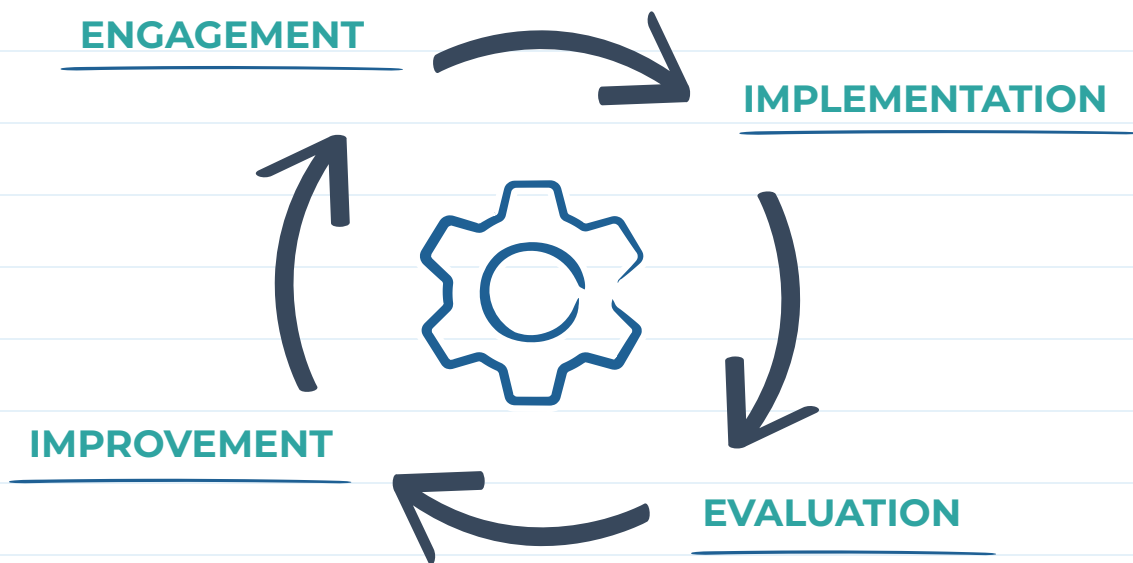
The task force, facilitated by the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, held 12 meetings over seven months, bringing together nearly 30 educators, stakeholders, and testing experts.

In December 2024, the State Board of Education approved the task force's recommendations, which include making state assessments more accessible and fairer for every student group; ensuring test length and content accurately reflect our state's academic standards; and improving score reporting for families and educators.

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Implementation of this Strategic Plan will continue with the further development, refinement, and execution of strategies, initiatives, and programs to achieve the outcomes and goals described within. Effective implementation will involve clear communication, strong leadership, and continued engagement of stakeholders.

Through a cycle of implementation, evaluation, and improvement, the Strategic Plan will remain dynamic, responsive, and aligned with evolving needs. Progress towards meeting the targets will be regularly monitored at the state and local levels, and shared publicly on a regular basis.



STRATEGIC PLAN DATA

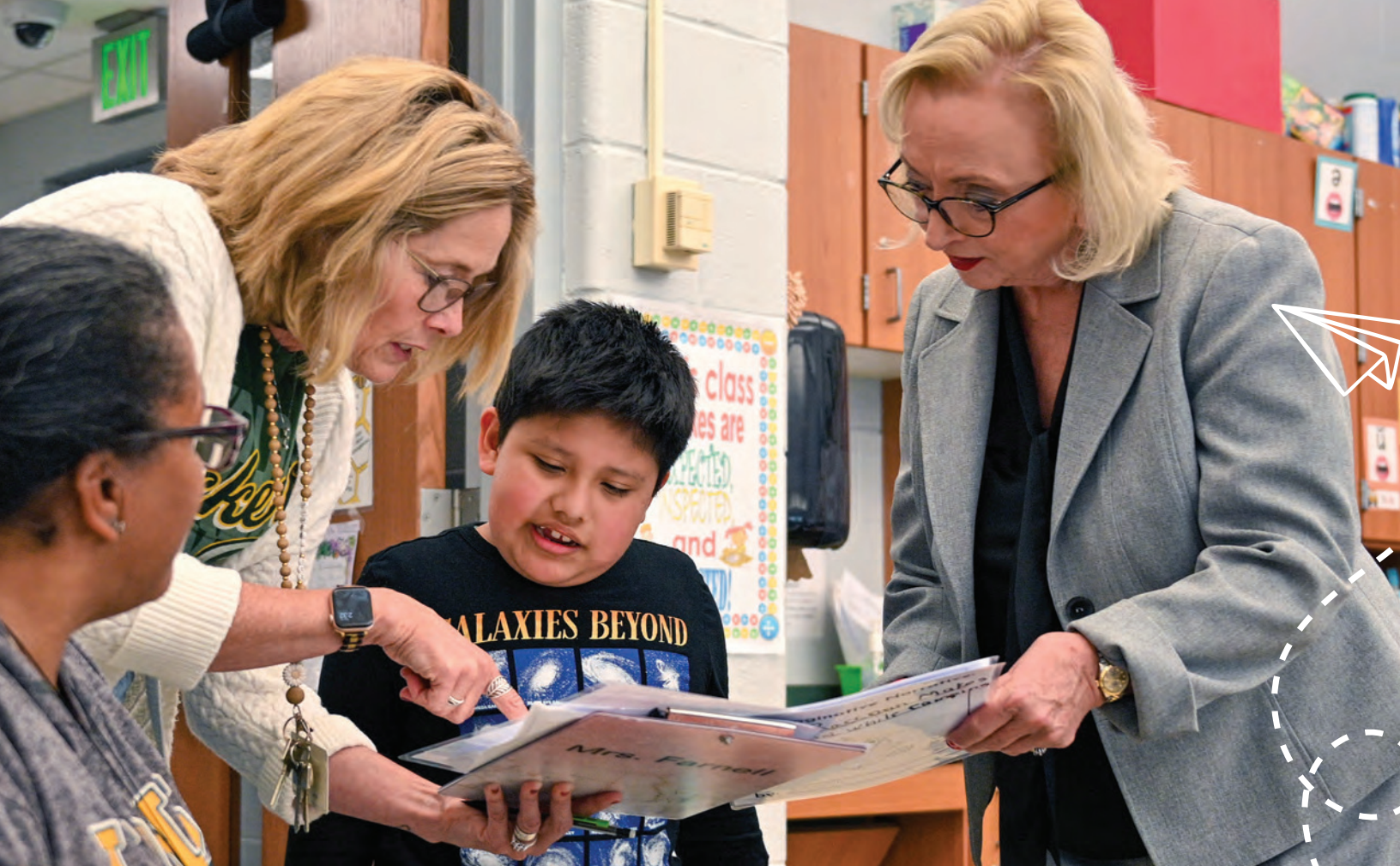
A data dashboard is available on the MSDE website that will track aligned metrics and targets and will continue to be published online for all stakeholders to monitor MSDE's progress towards achieving our goals.



[VIEW DATA DASHBOARD](#)



Visit the MSDE website to learn more:
strategicplan.marylandpublicschools.org









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