Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

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

DATE: October 29, 2026

SUBJECT: Teacher Recruitment and Vacancy Update
INFORMATION ONLY

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

Pillar 2: High-Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders
Goal: Every school has high-quality and diverse teachers and leaders.
Outcomes:
2.A. Increase the percentage of teachers with a professional license
2.B. Increase the percentage of teachers retained over the last three years
2.D Increase the percentage of new teachers of color

Purpose

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on beginning-of-year teacher vacancies and to present an overview of statewide recruitment initiatives.

Executive Summary

Local education agencies are required to report vacancy data twice annually, once at the beginning of the school year and again in January. The presentation provides first-day-of-school vacancy rates for the 2026-2027 school year and an update on statewide recruitment initiatives aimed at diversifying and increasing the number of high-quality teachers across the State.

Action

No action required.

Attachment

Teacher Recruitment and Vacancy Update.pdf



Teacher Recruitment and Vacancy Update

DIVISION OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

Presented By | Kelly Meadows, Assistant State Superintendent

October 29, 2026

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MSDE Strategic Plan Goals

1

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



PILLAR 1: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

2

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



PILLAR 2: HIGH-QUALITY & DIVERSE TEACHERS AND LEADERS

3

Every student graduates high school college and career ready.



PILLAR 3: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS



Every student is matched with the resources they need to ensure their success.

4

PILLAR 4: MORE RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



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

5

PILLAR 5: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Visit the Maryland State Department of Education website to learn more about the Strategic Plan!

strategicplan.marylandpublicschools.org

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT



GOAL 2

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

2.A	Increase the percentage of teachers with a professional license.
2.B	Increase the percentage of teachers retained over the last three years.
2.D	Increase the percentage of new teachers of color.

State-Level Recruitment Initiatives

National Teacher Recruitment Campaign

TEACH MARYLAND.ORG

A three-stage model that feeds Maryland's educator pipeline

01 IDENTIFY

Potential future teachers are reached wherever they are — through digital advertising, social media, TV/radio PSAs, job boards (LinkedIn, Indeed), and education fairs across Maryland.

02 CULTIVATE

Aspiring educators' interest is nurtured through strategic touchpoints: email sequences, event invitations, virtual info sessions, and connections to Maryland EPPs.

03 SUPPORT

Candidates receive 1-on-1 coaching, financial assistance, application checklists, how-to guides, and deadline reminders to help them complete and submit their EPP application.

Recruitment Campaign - Partnership Structure & Roles

How MSDE, TEACH Maryland, EPPs, and LEAs each contribute

MSDE

State Education Agency (SEA)

- Serves as the SEA partner — authorizes and anchors the initiative statewide
- Partners with TEACH to attend recruitment events and boost marketing
- Connects TEACH Maryland to EPPs and LEAs across Maryland
- Receives annual data reports on pipeline progress

TEACH Maryland

Recruitment & Support Platform

- Manages all candidate outreach, marketing, and coaching
- Operates teachmaryland.org and all digital tools
- Provides financial support (scholarships, fee reimbursements)
- Reports data to MSDE and partner institutions

EPPs

Educator Preparation Programs

- Lists programs in the TEACH Maryland program explorer
- Shares trackable links with prospective applicants
- Receives qualified, coached leads from TEACH Maryland
- Partners with TEACH Maryland to measure impact

LEAs

Local Education Agencies

- Deploys career interest surveys to staff and students
- Promotes TEACH Maryland through district communications
- Identifies Grow Your Own candidates (paras, substitutes, staff)
- Co-hosts info sessions with TEACH Maryland

TEACH MARYLAND.ORG

Teach Maryland Snapshot, October 2026

- 29,038 unique website visitors
- 2,439 subscribers
- 24,277 promotional emails sent
- 18 Institutions of Higher Education partners
- 10 local education agency partners

TEACH MARYLAND.ORG

Race / Ethnicity	% of Users
White	19.06%
Black or African American	25.00%
Hispanic or Latino	5.42%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.32%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.24%
Unknown / not reported	43.06%

Education Level	Count
Master's Degree	496
Bachelor's Degree	449
High School Diploma or GED	295
Four-Year College Student	96
Community College Student	84
Graduate Student	83
Associate's Degree	65

Source: Teach.org Monthly Results & ROI Update, October 1, 2026

Relocation Incentive Grant

Two-Year Commitment

Teachers must agree to teach for at least two years.

Unencumbered License

The license must be unrestricted and fully valid.



Out-of-State License

Teachers must hold a valid license from another state.

Signed Contract

A contract to teach in a Maryland public school is required.

- Up to $2000 per teacher
- $1 million allocated for FY26
  - Districts encumbered $912,000
  - Spent $ 275,870 as of October 15th
- $2 million allocated for FY27

Source: MD Code, Education Article §6-131

Grow Your Own Grant Program

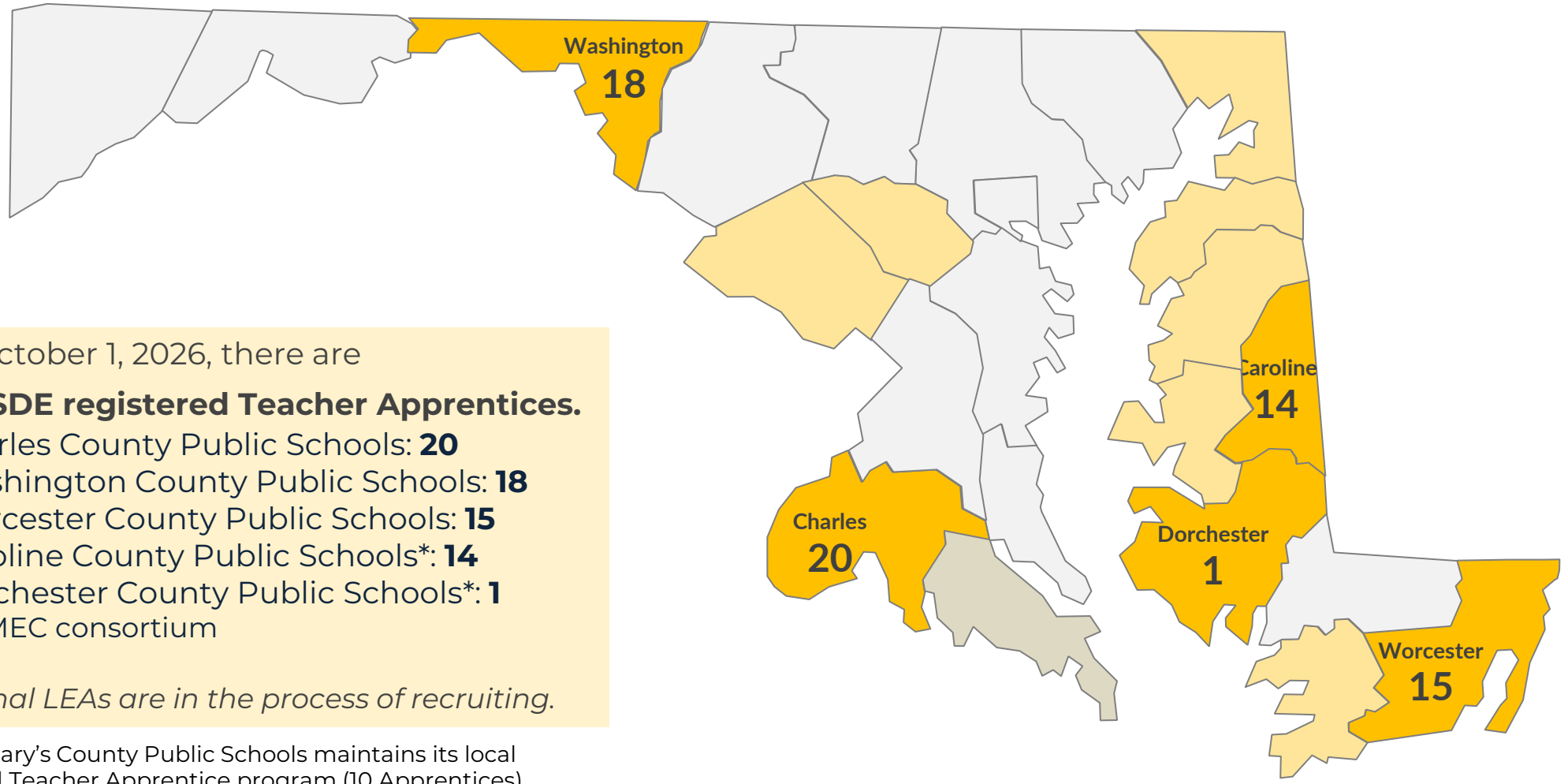
20 grants were awarded to collaboratives comprised of 16 LEAs, 16 Association Partners, and 18 IHE partners

Pathway Model	Target Audience	Key Structures & Delivery	LEAs/Consortia
Registered Apprenticeship (RTAP)	Paraprofessionals, Career Changers	Earn-as-you-learn, full salary + tuition, side-by-side journeyworker mentor	**12 LEAs** Charles, Montgomery, Howard*, Washington, Worcester, Eastern Shore Consortium
Para-to-Teacher Pathways	Current Paraprofessionals / ESPs	Coordinated coursework with IHEs while retaining school employment	**6 LEAs** Anne Arundel, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's
Teacher Residencies	Degree Holders / Career Changers	1-year immersive clinical co-teaching model with expert mentor	**1 LEA** Prince George's
In-District & Alt. Licensure	Conditional Hires / Career Changers	On-site coaching & targeted coursework for fast-track licensure	**12 LEAs** Anne Arundel, Charles, Montgomery, Eastern Shore Consortium

*HCPSS is registered with the RTAP outside of grant funding

Combined goals of 1400+ new teachers by 2030

MSDE Registered Teacher Apprenticeship- Inaugural Cohort



As of October 1, 2026, there are

68 MSDE registered Teacher Apprentices.

- Charles County Public Schools: **20**
- Washington County Public Schools: **18**
- Worcester County Public Schools: **15**
- Caroline County Public Schools*: **14**
- Dorchester County Public Schools*: **1**

*ESMEC consortium

Additional LEAs are in the process of recruiting.

Note: St. Mary's County Public Schools maintains its local Registered Teacher Apprentice program (10 Apprentices)

Alternative Pathways to Teacher Licensure

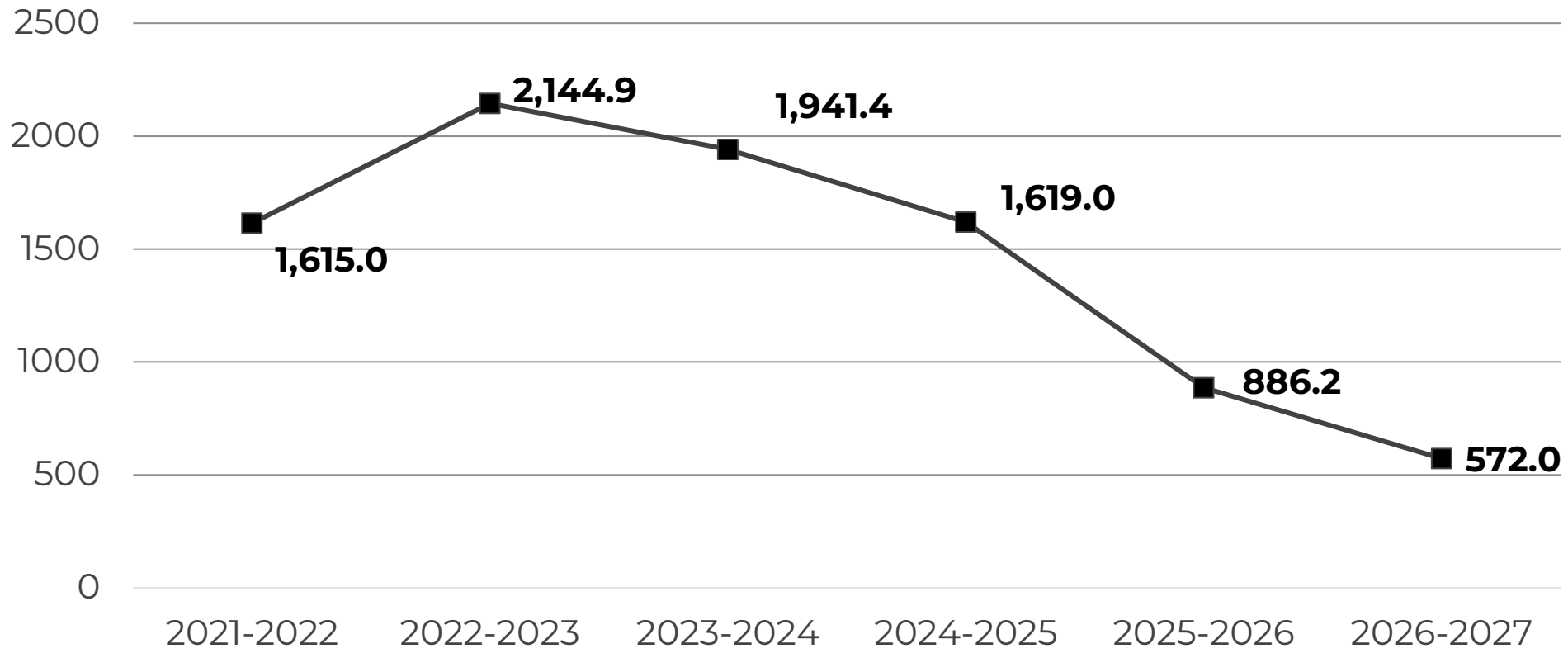
- The State Board and Professional Standards Board adopted an alternative pathway to licensure designed for individuals with content expertise (coursework or work experience) in the fine arts and secondary content areas
- Eligible individuals may take 7 pedagogical courses and pass a test of teaching ability to earn professional licensure
- Applies to the following areas:

Art	Agriculture/ Agribusiness	Computer Science	Environmental Science	Marketing	Social Studies
Music	Biology	Earth/Space Science	Family & Consumer Sciences	Mathematics	Speech Communication
Theatre	Business Education	Economics	Geography	Physical Science	Technology Education
Dance	Chemistry	English	History	Political Science	

Teacher Vacancies

Teacher Vacancies

Teacher vacancies decreased by 35.5% in 2026-2027 from the previous year. Special education vacancies decreased by 44.4% and elementary education vacancies decreased by 36.6%



Since 2022-2023, teacher vacancies have decreased by nearly three fourths (73.3%).

Source: MSDE Annual Vacancy Data Collection

Maryland Teacher Vacancies, 2022 to 2026

- Maryland teacher vacancies dropped below pre-pandemic levels at the start of the 2026–2027 school year
- Total statewide teacher vacancies dropped from a peak of 2,145 down to 572, representing a nearly 73% reduction in staffing shortages across Maryland school districts
- The sharpest reductions occurred in large districts

Local Education Agency	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
Allegany	0	4	7	13.6	9.6
Anne Arundel	217	150	67	25.17	14
Baltimore City	196.5	240	188	69.5	57
Baltimore County	337.3	171.5	74	33.4	27.2
Calvert	14	16	10	7.5	2
Caroline	1	12	0	0	0
Carroll	9	11	5	3	2.6
Cecil	0	4	0	0	1
Charles	82	123	62	59	21
Dorchester	22	16.2	12	10	4.5
Frederick	68	77	38	27.8	24
Garrett	1	3	1	2	2
Harford	2	2	2	0	1
Howard	65	47.2	52	32.8	44.4
Kent	4	4	4	0	0
Montgomery	173	172	157	114.05	102.2
Prince George's	896.6	815	901	434.4	215.5
Queen Anne's	2	3	0	4	4
St. Mary's	25	35	15	14	7
Somerset	8	4	8	10	7
Talbot	5	11	5	4	5
Washington	6	9	3	10	10
Wicomico	11	6	5	5	7
Worcester	0	6	4	7	4
Totals	**2,144.9**	**1,941.4**	**1,619.0**	**886.2**	**572.0**

Source: MSDE Annual Vacancy Data Collection

Top Teacher Vacancy Areas, 2026

- Special Education faces the highest shortage by a wide margin
- Math, ESOL, Fine Arts, and Sciences make up a significant portion of the remaining vacancies
- It is worth noting that there were 26 assistant principal vacancies at the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year (not included in the teacher vacancy count)

Licensure Areas	Vacancies
Special Education	200.4
Elementary Education	92.1
Math	36.6
ESOL	36.0
Fine Arts	33.9
Sciences	33.2

Source: MSDE Annual Vacancy Data Collection

National Teacher Vacancies

- In 2026, 50 states plus the District of Columbia employed an estimated 387,843 teachers who were not fully licensed for their assignment
- Twenty-nine states plus the District of Columbia published data on vacancies, showing 37,569 unfilled teaching positions
- At a minimum, 425,412 positions were either unfilled or filled by teachers not fully certified for their assignments, representing about 1 in 8 of all teaching positions nationally
- States most commonly reported shortage areas in special education (45 states), science (41 states), and math (40 states)
- Compared to 2025, these estimates represent an increase in teaching positions that were either unfilled or filled with teachers not fully certified for their assignments, among states that reported data
- Over the past four years, this is the third consecutive year of increases - particularly in the estimated number of positions filled by teachers who are not fully licensed

Source: Learning Policy Institute. (2026). An Overview of Teacher Shortages: 2026 [Fact sheet]

Questions