



# MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR RACIAL EQUITY IN EDUCATION ASKS: Implementing the Kirwan Commission's Recommendations

1. **EQUITABLE FUNDING:** Ensure that the funding formula for Maryland schools addresses race- and class-based inequities by targeting the bulk of new money to the schools and educators serving our students with the greatest needs.
  - i. Maintain Maryland's progressive funding weights for low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities. (While also adopting the proposed concentration of poverty investment.)
  - ii. Close loopholes to ensure that state resources are focused on the highest-need districts (e.g., by adjusting remaining "floor" to account for the differing capacities of districts to pay and preserving requirements for local contribution to education).
  - iii. Require that the funds generated to address the needs of low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities are actually used to support those students within the district and include appropriate accountability mechanisms.
  - iv. Ensure that Maryland counts all students living in poverty, regardless of their immigration status or their family's decision to participate in public assistance programs, by using a blend of both direct outreach to families through income surveys and expansion of Maryland's use of "direct certification" data to include enrollment in Medicaid.

*To ensure that this money is spent in ways that improve opportunities and outcomes, particularly for students of color, the Coalition also asks that the Legislature implement the following policies:*

2. **HIGH-QUALITY AND DIVERSE TEACHERS AND LEADERS:** The Kirwan Commission's recommendations to turn teaching in Maryland into a high-status profession are a good start. In implementing these recommendations, MAREE urges the Legislature to:
  - (a) Require that districts address the inequitable access to strong teachers for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.
    - i. In exchange for new Kirwan funding, require districts to annually report data on assignment to novice, out-of-field, and ineffective teachers and disaggregated data on turnover AND take meaningful action to address those inequities (which must include providing incentives — financial or otherwise — to recruit or retain strong teachers in high-need schools and to teach high-need students within those schools).
    - ii. In exchange for new Kirwan funding, require districts to prioritize teacher leader roles in the highest-need schools or teachers of high-need students.
    - iii. Require all future general education teachers to take at least one course and demonstrate competencies in teaching English learners.

(b) Support the quality preparation of teacher candidates to teach a diverse student population, including supporting the preparation and retention of more educators of color.

- i. Fund grants for HBCUs, HACUs, and MSIs, and alternative certification programs with a track record of preparing diverse and high-quality teachers and leaders, to support their efforts to prepare candidates for success in the classroom, including as measured by new licensure exams. To ensure these awards fund programs that provide high-quality preparation, the state could require the programs to demonstrate high first-time pass rates on licensure exams.
  - a. Fund grants for the development of partnership programs between community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and graduate programs with the goal of building a better pipeline into the teaching and school leadership professions for people of color.
- ii. Require all teacher preparation programs and alternative certification programs to publicly report data on the diversity of students, graduates, and graduates who pass licensure exams the first time.
- iii. Create and fund a “grow-your-own” pathway into the teaching profession for candidates from untapped sources (e.g., local high schools, paraprofessionals, after-school staff, youth development workers, etc.) who are likely to reflect the student population and are already dedicated to serving students of color.
- iv. Expand teaching scholarships and loan assistance for highly skilled and diverse candidates to teach in high-need schools — and require a commitment of four years, target the program to the highest-need schools in the state, and require MHEC to report on the geographic and racial diversity of recipients of scholarships and loan assistance.
- v. Invest in a state-funded annual salary supplement for bilingual educators who both fill a critical need for the state’s rapidly growing English learner population and enhance the racial and ethnic diversity of the workforce.

**3. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PATHWAYS:** Address disparities in access to rigorous coursework by addressing financial barriers and ensuring that high-achieving students are automatically enrolled in advanced courses, rather than relying solely on the recommendations of educators.

- i. Require that districts use universal screening to identify students for elementary gifted and talented programs.
- ii. Require that districts automatically enroll any high-performing student in the next most rigorous level of courses or programs available in that subject.
- iii. Address financial barriers to participation in Advanced Placement and dual enrollment, by waiving the cost of AP exams for students from low-income families and prohibiting public post-secondary institutions from charging fees to low-income students who are dually enrolled.

**4. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION:** Put guardrails in place to ensure that all curricular and instructional programs and offerings provide essential competencies for students to be successful in college and career.

- i. Require districts to provide adequate planning and provision of CTE programs that are aligned with the highest market demand and appropriate industry standards for all students.
- ii. Require districts to annually report data on rates of enrollment, success on technical assessments, proficiency rates on high school reading and math assessments, attainment of college credit, and percentage of students employed in job in CTE field within six months of graduating for students overall, by racial/ethnic and socioeconomic group, and by CTE program. Require districts with disparities to explain the root causes of those gaps and to take meaningful action to address them.
- iii. Ensure that districts have the resources (operational and capital) to design and provide high-quality CTE programs aligned with the highest market demand and appropriate industry standards for all students.
- iv. Fund grants for students from low-income backgrounds to participate in paid externships.

Require that, by the end of eighth grade, schools support every student and their family in developing and following an individualized plan to assist the student in making decisions about curricular and instructional programs and offerings as part of their overall postsecondary plan.

**5. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:** Increase access to high-quality early childhood education for children of color, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, and dual-language learners.

- i. Provide guidance on how districts should determine who gets access to full-day Pre-K slots and extended-day services, prioritizing (a) students from families with the lowest incomes, (b) students with special education needs, and (c) students who are English learners, and especially (d) students who qualify as having multiple needs.
- ii. Require that any participating early childhood program be subject to the same regulations as public prekindergarten programs, including the ban on suspensions and expulsions, in order to access public funds.

## MEMBERS



## SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

