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State Superintendent of Schools

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**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education  
**FROM:** Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *Lillian M. Lowery*  
**DATE:** June 23, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** Maryland's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek approval to submit Maryland's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators to the United States Department of Education (USED).

**BACKGROUND:**

In July 2014, U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, asked each State to write a plan describing the steps it will take to ensure that "poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers" as required by section 1111 (b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). In response to this request and as part of Maryland's continuous effort to provide equal educational opportunity to every child, including meaningful opportunities for all students to succeed, regardless of family income or race, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) worked with stakeholders across the State to develop this plan.

**CONTENT:**

Maryland's Plan is being developed in two parts. The first part was to collect and analyze data from the State perspective and identify State strategies that can reduce equity gaps. The initial work included analyzing the data to identify gaps in the percentages of poor and/or minority students taught by uncertified, out-of-field and inexperienced teachers. This data was run for the State and the LEAs, but is reviewed at the State level from the State perspective.

In the second part of the plan, MSDE will partner with LEAs to address equity data and relate that data to student performance, attendance, and graduation rates. The State will work with identified LEAs to develop equity strategies individualized by LEA.

The plan provides multiple strategies to incentivize, reward, support, and work with teachers to address why they may be unqualified, inexperienced, or teaching out-of-field. The State recognizes that this is a living, breathing plan that will evolve as demographics, information, and environments change.

**PROCESS:**

An overview of this plan was presented to the State Board of Education on May 19th. Following this update, the Chief Academic Officer shared the draft plan with the LEA Superintendents at the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM) meeting on June 5, 2015. The plan was also shared electronically with PSSAM on June 5, 2015 and with the State Board on June 8, 2015. The plan was posted on MSDE's website for public comment on June 8 and will be available through June 19, 2015. All feedback from the posting will be shared with the State Board at the June 23, 2015 meeting.

Members of the internal group brought the process and/or plan to multiple meetings with individual stakeholder groups including English Language Learner Advisory (May 1, 2015), Title I Coordinators (May 12-13, 2015), Title I Community of Practitioners (May 27, 2015), Master Teacher Training (May 26, 2015 and June 2, 2015), Superintendent's Parental Engagement Council (June 3, 2015), Special Education Advocates (June 5, 2015), and the Education That is Multicultural and Achievement Network (ETMA) (June 10, 2015). All comments and recommendations from these meetings were reviewed by the internal Equity committee and revisions were made as appropriate.

For the second part of the plan, individual meetings are being scheduled with six Local Education Agencies (LEAs) as identified in the plan to review their data, conduct the root cause analysis, and identify individual strategies to address the gaps. These six LEAs are Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Somerset Counties and Baltimore City. These meetings are being scheduled between June 17 and July 9, 2015. Individuals invited to the meetings will be those identified by the local superintendents as appropriate to their team and organizational structure.

Upon approval by the State Board, the plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education on July 1, 2015.

**ACTION:**

Request for approval to submit Maryland's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators to the U.S. Department of Education.

Attachment ([marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/leadership/docs/MarylandEquityPlan2015DraftMASTER6-5-15.pdf](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/leadership/docs/MarylandEquityPlan2015DraftMASTER6-5-15.pdf))