

Senator Paul Pinsky

James Senate Office Building, Room 220

11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

August 30, 2018

Dear Senator Pinsky and members of High Quality Teachers and Leaders Workgroup:

We are greatly impressed by the depth and breadth of thought that has gone into the recommendations from Workgroup 2. From conversations with our fellow education deans and directors, we know how fortunate we are to have a truly dedicated group of concerned citizens and community leaders thinking so deeply about the policies surrounding teacher preparation and teacher quality. We are grateful for the effort, energy and careful consideration that you have given to these issues on behalf of Maryland's students and taxpayers.

Because we live and breathe the work of preparing and developing high quality education professionals, we recognize the value of other perspectives in identifying key questions and framing solutions. But because we live and breathe this work, we believe we have some insights and nuanced understandings of the reality on the ground that we hope you will take into consideration as you formulate the wide-ranging recommendations that touch the P-20 pipeline.

We have attached some targeted comments to this letter, but wanted to highlight high level concerns related to two of your most important and wide-ranging recommendations:

1. The year-long internship
2. The role of graduate education in career ladder progression

Internship:

The year-long Internship was a key transformational issue addressed in the Joint Chairman's report on Teacher Education (November 14, 2015). That report was part of the background material presented to NCEE and the Kirwan Commission. We have attached the relevant recommendations to this letter. Our principal concern about the current recommendation is that devoting a full year of a four year undergraduate program to an internship or practicum significantly reduces the amount of time students can spend broadening their foundational liberal studies, and deepening their content knowledge and mastery. We need teachers who have deep content knowledge and strong, extended mentored experience in classrooms: the

medical school model is frequently cited as the model for preparing knowledgeable professionals.

Based on the 2010 Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) policy document,¹ the recommendation in the Joint Chairs report was to build a new model, including a three year collaboratively developed (higher education and public schools) induction program that would mentor new teachers into the profession over an extended internship/induction period. The Joint Chairs report recommended developing and studying pilot projects to assess whether and how such an innovative approach to teacher preparation and professional development would lead to greater quality, satisfaction, retention, and student learning.

The role of graduate education in career ladder progression

We recognize the value of National Board Certification and its value in supporting professional development up the career ladder, however, it does not provide actual specialization in knowledge-based content areas as a master's degree does. We believe that, ideally career ladders would not be set up as rigid, either/or scenarios. Rather, we hope that salary and promotion incentives would follow teachers who pursue either path, with the greatest incentives going to those teachers who pursue both, who will then be in the best position to grow professionally in the classroom and/or pursue the Teacher Leadership or Administrative Track. Putting a career ladder in place that does not incentivize teachers to pursue advanced degrees will come at a cost—where will our schools turn when they need expertise in the areas of graduate-level degrees such as Administration and Supervision, Mathematics Instructional Leader, Reading Specialist, Gifted and Talented Education, Special Education, Instructional Technology, Media Specialist/Librarian, STEM Education, TESOL, etc.?

Again, we want to thank you for your dedication to this work, which we believe will contribute to a greatly enhanced P-20 educational system in the state of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rice, Dean, College of Education, UMCP and Co-Chair of the USM/MICUA Education Deans Council

Chadia Abras, Associate Dean, School of Education, JHU and Co-Chair of the USM/MICUA Education Deans Council

¹ https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/State_Policy_Implications_Model_Core_Teaching_DRAFT_DISCUSSION_DOCUMENT_2010.pdf, p. 9.

Working Group 2: Comments from USM/MICUA Education Deans Council

The comments below were submitted to Dr. Nancy Shapiro, Associate Vice Chancellor, University System of Maryland, from individual deans and directors of teacher preparation from both MICUA and USM institutions in response to her request for comments on the draft recommendations of the High Quality Teachers and Leaders Workgroup (Workgroup #2) of the Commission for Innovation and Excellence in Education.

Element 2a. Design Assumptions.

Design assumptions in this element imply major program restructuring and curricular changes. The working group members should take into consideration the program approval process required for this level of change at both the institution level as well as with state level program approval for licensure programs. There are implications related to having the necessary resources (funding and time allocation) for faculty to engage in this level of program development work.

Element 2a. Design Assumption 1.c.

The expectation that teachers with initial certification from a four-year program would have the competencies “to conduct expert diagnoses” related to student success seems unrealistic. These are the competencies expected of experienced teachers having completed specialized training (e.g. Special Education diagnostician or Master’s in Reading). It is suggested that the language be revised from “diagnose” to “identify” or something similar.

Element 2a. Design Assumption 2.a.

While there is support for more time devoted to the internship phase, there are many implications for both educator preparation programs and our PDS partners related to the cost and role of mentor teachers, liaisons, etc. For example, an additional semester of clinical practice at Salisbury University would require an additional 10-12 credit hours (\$1,918-\$2,301) plus the cost of the additional field experiences (\$3,050) for a per teacher candidate cost of \$4,968-\$5,351 depending on the licensure program.

It will be a tremendous fiscal burden for smaller teacher preparation programs to implement a full year residency with methods professors embedded in partner schools. We do not have a sufficient number of faculty to staff methods classes in over twenty buildings for 60+ candidates annually. In addition, given that we offer 28 programs/certifications, it is absolutely impossible to cluster teacher candidates in a sufficiently limited number of buildings so as to allow us to teach in the PDS. For example, special education is one of our largest programs. There are not enough special education mentors to allow clustering.

Element 2a. Design Assumption 5.

What is meant by the statement: “MSDE must increase its capacity to provide technical assistance and support to teacher training programs”?

Element 2a. Implementation Considerations 1.b.

Consider changing the language related to Professor Master Teachers holding appointments as “clinical faculty” to “clinical adjunct faculty” in which they teach at both institutions. There needs to be an emphasis on a co-selection process between P12 and IHEs with collaboration on the criteria that would be used to make such adjunct appointments.

Element 2b. Design Assumption 1.

There needs to be a gradual phase-in process for the adoption of a performance-based assessment requirement for licensure. An unwanted consequence might be an increase in teacher shortages at first, especially related to teacher transfers from other states.

Element 2b. Design Assumption 3.

What is the “newly developed tool” referenced in this assumption? Is this referring to the a “state-specific exam of teacher content mastery” in Design Assumption 2?

Element 2d. Design Assumption 1.d.

What is meant by the development of “a specialized program of study” for 15 or more recipients of the Maryland Teaching Fellows scholarship program? Also, what happens if a teacher candidate does not fulfill expectations of the program (e.g. change in major, fail licensure exam, etc.)?

Element 2g. Design Assumption 6.d.

This recommendation will have a severe impact on graduate degree programs. Consider including language related to specialized degree programs that would be desirable within this framework.

Hidden Costs

Hidden costs associated with teacher preparation: In addition to foregoing lost wages when immersed in the student teaching experience, there are additional hidden costs associated with the Praxis assessments, fingerprinting and background checks, mentor teacher payments, etc., which can negatively impact student retention. There is a need for increased scholarship funds to offset these costs, especially during the yearlong student teaching internship when students are unable to work.

Praxis Assessment Costs: Every candidate completes the Basic Skills Assessment (Praxis, SAT/ACT, or GRE). Additionally, candidates complete the tests required for specific licensure areas – the Praxis Subject Assessments. Candidates enrolled in dual certification programs must meet the testing requirement for both disciplinary areas.

Example:

Praxis costs for a candidate in the Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education (dual certification program):

Basic Skills Exam:

Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators	Test Code	MD Score	Fees
Reading (sr - 85 min.) and	5712	156	\$90
Writing (sr & cr - 100 min.) and	5722	162	\$90
Mathematics (sr - 85 min.)	5732	150	\$90

Note: A reduced test fee of \$150 is available for the Praxis Core when a candidate registers to take all three tests on the same day.

Praxis Subject Assessments:

			Fees
Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education (Content)	5025	\$120
	Principles of Learning and Teaching: Early Childhood (Pedagogy)	5621	\$146

			Fee
Special Education	Core Knowledge and Applications	5354	\$120

Assuming the candidate takes all three Praxis Core assessments on the same day, the total cost for the Praxis assessments would be \$536.

Fingerprinting Costs: UMD collaborates with four different school districts for PDS placements: Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), Howard County Public Schools (HCPS), Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS), and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). College/university students who will be completing either an observation/practicum or a student teaching internship in these school districts must be fingerprinted. The costs run around \$54-\$57 dollars: AACPS fingerprinting costs \$57;

PGCPS charges \$56.57; MCPS charges \$54. For Howard County, candidates are allowed to be fingerprinted through a number of different providers, with varied costs (similar to the amounts listed above). Any applicant who was previously fingerprinted for “Child Care” for another school system is required to undergo a complete fingerprint background check and child protective service clearance if the previous investigation (fingerprinting date) is older than 365 calendar days). Starting 2018-19, MCPS will no longer accept the 365 day forms for fingerprinting information.

Example Student Teaching Fees: UMD charges candidates a \$750 student teaching fee. \$400 goes directly to the mentor teacher in the school district. \$300 is used for edTPA official scoring, and \$50 goes toward the costs for administering edTPA (including candidate supports and training for local school district personnel).

Miscellaneous Costs: As noted above, there also are costs involved with candidates having to forego the opportunity to work in order to complete the full-time internship, as well as expenses associated with instructional materials used during the teaching internship which are the responsibility of the teacher candidate.

General Feedback Statements and Questions

- Encourage Workgroup 2 to recommend the adoption of the lexicon from AACTE’s Clinical Practice Commission report.
- No K-12 review of these major changes. School district leadership needs to be involved as well as school district PDS personnel. Major change in schools that become PDS. There is major impact on PDS process and personnel in schools.
- Change the review/research process to examine at least the following: PDS impact, use of Master Teachers, meaning of rigor, effect of testing etc. This should be an on-going formative evaluation not a summative 5 year evaluation.
- Need definitions and examples of the international comparisons for rigor and PDS.
- Need a review of what is now being done.
- Review standards against CAEP and other national standards.
- There is a lot of misunderstood information. For example, Massachusetts has been 1st or 2nd on most measures since at least 2000 on NAEP scores (and perhaps as early as 1992). Given the short span of time (2 years since the introduction of the MTEL), it is unlikely to be the driver of performance as it would have little impact on the teacher population. Where is the evidence that MTEL is driving achievement and effectiveness? There similar issues with the Reading advocates agenda.
- To construct these significant recommendations based on the practices of NJ and MA is flawed logic. Many variables account for variance in student achievement. Several of these critical variables, NAEP and district organization, appear to have been ignored in this process. For example, the use of NAEP scores (NJ/MA

versus other states) is not factual. NJ has a 275 in 8th grade reading in 2017. MA has a 278 on the same test in the same year. Vermont and CT have a 273. PA has a 270. Not a significant difference. And clearly not a difference that should drive such program threatening and fiscally challenging recommendations. A second variable clearly impacting student achievement independent of teacher preparation programs is district organization. Both MA and NJ are comprised of smaller districts versus the large countywide systems in MD. Having been a school superintendent in PA (also a state with small, locally controlled districts), it is clear that reforms and innovations are more effectively implemented in smaller environments. Small districts can be more nimble when responding to student achievement needs. To require IHEs to implement such radical reforms without thoroughly considering all variables is irresponsible.

- Will Teacher Academies of Maryland (TAM) program be addressed and/or expanded?

II. Key recommendations in the area of pre-tenure induction (From *Joint Chairs Report on Teacher Education November 14, 2015*)

The Task Force envisions a robust and revolutionary induction period that needs to be conceptualized as building a bridge between pre-service and fully empowered classroom teachers. Taking the lead from the CCSSO Task Force on Educator Preparation and Entry into the Profession (2012):

States should also leverage the relationships between preparation providers and the districts in which their candidates are placed (either for clinical practice, residencies, or employment) so there is follow through into the early induction years and a culture of collegial coaching carries over from preparation into early practice. The state's interest is in seeing initial licensure candidates supported and further developed so they reach the professional licensure stage with limited attrition. This opportunity to learn and scaffold the development of early educators should be transparent and resourced, and should be a shared responsibility among preparation providers, districts, and states. (p. 16)
NCTAF has estimated the annual cost of teacher turnover in Prince George's County Public School System to be \$23,292,500 and the annual cost for Baltimore City was estimated to be \$19,013,750. (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), 2007) (Zimpher, 2013)

The intent of the recommendations below builds on the pre-service recommendations and can be seen as the second leg of the three-legged stool. During the induction period, it should be clear that only teachers who exhibit the highest standards of performance with reasonable support will be promoted to tenured positions.

1. Establish a three-year residency model, in collaboration with higher education, for all pre-tenured teachers of record that would include ongoing direct feedback and continuous practice through extended mentorship, continuing communities of practice, and opportunities for pre-tenure teachers to participate in professional development at teaching innovation centers. (National Education Association, 2014)
 - a. Research and analyze costs of recommended new models to school districts and institutions of higher education. Such costs might include: substitutes, stipends, and mileage.
 - b. Integrate community college AAT programs into continuing communities of practice and innovation centers.
 - c. Research and analyze creating a specialized post-baccalaureate/master's program or endorsements in Teacher Leadership for mentors and content-specific instructional leaders.
 - d. Research and analyze the impact of mentoring and other new teacher professional development on multiple measures of teacher performance, by using classroom observations and including student outcome and growth measures.

2. Establish collaboratively supported Teaching Innovation Centers (hubs of innovation) where pre-service and in-service teachers can be exposed to state-of-the-art professional development.
 - a. Centers should be collaboratively supported by two-year and four-year institutions of higher education and school districts.
 - i. Centers are envisioned as regional pilots to explore “out of the box thinking” about preparation and professional development.
 - ii. Centers would be venues to explore virtual learning and social networking as learning vehicles in addition to traditional, research-based instructional practice.
 - b. Centers should include capacity to anticipate the impact of technology and focus on preparing teachers for future classrooms where teaching and learning may happen differently than it does now.
 - c. Centers should include capacity to offer simulations to pre-service and in-service educators.
 - d. Community colleges should be looked at as possible venues for centers of innovation.
3. Provide funding for Centers initially with state “seed” money, and subsequently with savings from reducing teacher attrition.
 - a. Analyze costs associated with teacher attrition and realistically estimate savings.
 - b. Evaluate Centers after three years using multiple sources of data.

SWOT Review of Recommended Action Items:

Induction

- Establish regional P-20 councils where IHEs and PreK-12 school districts can work on local and regional issues. Regional Councils would set their own agendas, engage in collaborative leadership, and report regularly to the Governor’s P-20 Leadership Council.
- Bridge pre-service and induction by creating alignments between pre-service and in-service professional development experiences and strengthening the structure for induction by creating opportunities for IHE engagement.
- Restructure the school schedule/calendar to include opportunities for collaborative planning between experienced and new teachers.