

BUILDING BLOCK 9



INSTITUTE A GOVERNANCE SYSTEM TO DEVELOP POWERFUL
POLICIES AND IMPLEMENT THEM AT SCALE

High-performing education systems have governance systems with the authority and legitimacy to develop coherent, powerful policies and are capable of implementing them at scale. This means that:

- roles and responsibilities are clear;
- there are shared goals across the system;
- progress towards these goals are clearly tracked; and
- there are ways to identify parts of the system that are not performing well and to provide effective help so that they improve.

This analysis briefly reviews these aspects of Maryland's governance structure and accountability system, compares Maryland to top-performing states in the U.S. and to the benchmark international jurisdictions, and then provides a set of recommendations for Maryland to consider.

Overview of Maryland's Education Governance Structures:

Roles and responsibilities

Maryland's State Department of Education (MSDE) oversees pre-kindergarten to 12th grade, including career and technical education. The inclusion of early childhood education in MSDE is the result of a 2005 reform which was meant to better coordinate early childhood with the K-12 system. Maryland was one of the first states to do this, although it is now more common. The Department is accountable to the State Board of Education, which prepares draft agency budgets and sets education standards and graduation requirements.

Higher education is overseen by the Maryland Higher Education Commission which serves as the coordinating board and is a state agency. The Commission was created in 1988 to coordinate all segments of post-secondary education in Maryland

including the public and private four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, and private career schools. The Commission conducts strategic planning every four years and implements policy set by the Governor and the General Assembly. It is also empowered to comment and make recommendations on the higher education budget for the state and advise the Governor and Assembly on policy. As in many other states, it serves as a coordinating board rather than a governing board.

There are several other state-level entities — the Professional Standards and Teacher Board and the Governor's P20 Leadership Council — that also play oversight and coordination roles. The Professional Standards and Teacher Board sets standards for the education and certification of teachers and teacher education programs. The P20 Council was initially created in 1995 and codified into statute in 2010 as a partnership between the state education system and business leaders to ensure that Maryland students are prepared for jobs in a new economy. It is authorized to make recommendations to the Governor and the legislature to do this. The P20 Council includes state, local and private partners from education, higher education, and economic and workforce development.

Goal setting & strategic planning

Unlike top performing international systems, Maryland does not have an agency or other authorized body that is responsible for connecting the goals of the education system to the economic development objectives of the state. Maryland's State Department of Education (MSDE) has a set of goals — close the achievement gap, increase college and career readiness, reduce the need for remediation, attract and develop great educators, support a fair system of evaluation, turn around the lowest performing schools, and expand high-quality

school models — but these goals do not have a set of benchmarks against which to measure progress, and it is not clear the extent to which they have been developed with input across agencies or with input from the public. Several other parts of the education system have strategic planning processes — including MSDE’s ESSA planning groups, the Higher Education Commission, and the P20 Leadership Council which is charged with making recommendations across the broad education and workforce development system. A mechanism to coordinate these plans across systems would help to improve system efficiency and reduce duplication where it exists. In addition, a systematic process for collecting public and private sector input into this planning would help build public understanding of and support for the system. This type of outreach did occur in the recent ESSA planning process, which was required by the federal government.

Maryland has a planning process within its Department of Education put in place by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act. This process requires local school systems to create “master plans” that show how they will allocate their funds to raise student achievement for all groups of students, including at-risk populations. The State Superintendent must approve these plans annually and the Department of Education monitors whether local systems achieve their objectives. This is a commendable process, but different from a statewide plan with statewide goals.

Tracking performance

Maryland has K-12 report cards which provide state, county and school-level data on results for indicators of performance, demographics, state tests, graduation rates and college enrollment. The state also has the Maryland Longitudinal Data System,

which was established in statute in 2010 and operationalized in 2014, with the express purpose of generating information about education performance and workforce outcomes that could be used to improve the system. Yet the state does not seem to be making use of this system to track major measures of system-level progress, such as the percent of students who enter high school and graduate on-time with a post-secondary degree or using the teacher demand information while accounting for teacher supply.

How Maryland Compares on Governance:

Benchmark states

Maryland’s governance structures are typical of many states in the U.S. It is notably among only a handful that have integrated early childhood education into its education system, with the purpose of ensuring a better continuity of service. New Jersey and Massachusetts both include early childhood under the umbrella of their education department and have higher education overseen by separate state agencies. Like many other states, the lines of authority between and among agencies and commissions overseeing the education system are not completely clear. Of the benchmark states, only New Hampshire has invested responsibility for all key parts of the education system within the state education agency. This is likely because it is a such a small state. The fact that it allows a much greater level of local discretion in implementing policies than is typical of most states likely means that policies are still not always aligned and coordinated at the state level. Massachusetts notably has a state Executive Office of Education reporting to the Governor with a mission to coordinate policy among the various education agencies and commissions in the

state. The Office (led by a Secretary of Education) was created with the express purpose of implementing a comprehensive ten-year strategic plan for the state's education system.

Like Maryland, most states have broad goal statements outlining what they want their students to know and be able to do and state strategies to help districts, schools and teachers meet these objectives, but there is often no strategic planning process to set benchmarks to measure progress and little to no alignment with the goals in the states' ESSA plans and other strategic plans across and within state agencies or other authorized state bodies. Massachusetts again is an exception, at least within its education department. While there is no cross-agency broad strategic planning process in the state, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has a strategic plan, with state-wide benchmarks that are measured annually and after five years, that the state regularly revisits and updates.

International jurisdictions

The international jurisdictions differ from the U.S. in that their education governance is generally more centralized in a national or provincial ministry that oversees all parts of the education system. Singapore and Finland each have a national education ministry whereas Shanghai and Ontario have similar structures at the provincial level. The one exception to central governance is in Ontario where higher education is overseen by a separate Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. It is not just the scope of oversight that is different, however. It is also that all four international jurisdictions set national or provincial frameworks for the systems, with national and provincial standards, curriculum frameworks across all subjects, syllabi and assessments. They also all oversee teacher

education and development and licensing centrally. The scope of their authority allows an alignment of policies that is rare in the United States.

What is also distinctive about all four international jurisdictions is that they all have a broad strategic plan for education with agreed-upon benchmarks to measure progress. These plans are reviewed on a regular basis and are developed with public input as well as input from a range of public and private sector partners. Shanghai, for example, creates provincial-level 10-year education plans based on the famous national Chinese ten-year plans. Ontario's education ministry has also done this, in partnership with the teacher's unions in the province. Its plan and goals have been updated regularly. Singapore notably organized broad public "conversations" about education and other policy goals. The latest "National Conversation" gathered input on a vision for the country's economy and its education system going through 2030. These outreach strategies build public support and understanding about the education system and help sustain an agenda through changes in system and political leadership.

Overview of Maryland's Accountability System:

School accountability

Maryland, like all other states, is revamping its state school accountability system as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Under ESSA, each state must have an accountability system for schools that is based on five indicators: 1) proficiency on assessments; 2) growth in proficiency in elementary and middle school or another academic indicator; 3) high school graduation rate; 4) progress of English language learners (ELL) towards proficiency; and 5) a non-academic indicator

of school quality or success. Each state sets its own proficiency level. Maryland's legislature passed the Protect Our Schools Act in 2017, which laid out an additional set of requirements. Specifically, it required that the state's system:

- Include at least three measures of school quality, one of which must be a school climate survey;
- Include access to or credit for a well-rounded curriculum indicative of on-track progress at key transition points at elementary and secondary school as an academic indicator;
- Create a composite score including academic and non-academic indicators that must not weight academic indicators more than 65 percent; and
- Weight each academic indicator and non-academic indicator at least 10 percent.

The proposed new accountability system in the state's ESSA would be reported using a five-star rating system based on a composite score. The composite score is calculated by combining the academic and non-academic indicators.

The academic indicators are 65 percent of the composite scores and include:

- Academic achievement: 20 percent for elementary, middle and high school
- ELL academic proficiency: 10 percent for elementary, middle and high school
- Other academic for elementary and middle school is:
 - 25 percent for academic growth
 - 10 percent for completion of a well-rounded curriculum
- Other academic for high school is:
 - 15 percent for graduation rate

- 10 percent for on track for 9th grade
- 10 percent for completion of a well-rounded curriculum

The school quality/student success (non-academic indicators) are 35 percent of the score. For elementary, middle and high school, they are:

- 15 percent for chronic absenteeism
- 10 percent for school climate
- 10 percent opportunities/access to a well-rounded curriculum

The state is also required to set both long and short-term goals for schools.

Maryland's long term goal is to reduce by 50 percent the number of students not proficient, including ELL students, by 2030 and raise the four-year high school graduation rate to 88.5 and the five-year rate to 90 percent by 2020. Maryland defines proficiency as a 4 or 5 on required PARCC exams.

In addition, ESSA requires states to identify low performing schools for two types of support: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). States must establish a methodology for identifying CSI schools that includes:

- The lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools
- High schools with graduation rates of less than 67 percent
- Schools with one or more subgroups performing below the lowest 5 percent and failing to improve after three years
- Other state-specified criteria

Maryland plans to include the lowest 5 percent of *all* schools, not just Title I schools, for CSI.

TSI schools are those with persistently underperforming subgroups. Specifically, states must identify schools with one or more subgroups performing the same as or worse than the lowest performing Title I schools or not meeting their targets for two or more consecutive years.

Based on Maryland's ESSA plan, each district with comprehensive support schools will receive an on-site visit from state officials to assess district staff capacity and fiscal responsibility. Available resources for technical assistance include support for analyzing performance data and developing improvement plans; a resource hub that will make available best practice tools, planning documents, templates and rubrics; targeted training for principals and teacher leaders; support for improving standards-based instructional practices and implementing MSDE-approved math and ELA curriculum; and coaching for school leaders of low-performing schools that do not improve over two years.

Teacher and principal accountability

Maryland requires that districts evaluate teachers and principals annually and lays out a framework for doing so, which districts can then adapt. The framework specifies that for teacher evaluation, both professional practices (measured by at least two classroom observations) and student growth (to be measured by multiple measures, one of which will be PARCC starting in 2017) each account for "significant" components of the evaluation results. Districts can adapt the framework from there: they can assign slightly different weights to student learning outcomes, set slightly different cut scores, and determine the rewards or sanctions associated with different levels of evaluation. Principals are evaluated within a framework set at the state level, again with indicators including both student growth and professional practice. The professional

practice indicators reflect the domains specified on the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework.

Teacher education accountability

The State Board of Education is responsible for setting the standards and general guidelines for approval of teacher preparation institutions, while the State Department of Education, with the advice of the 25-member Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, manages the process of oversight, periodic program reviews (every five to seven years, depending on the quality of the program's previous review), approval and reaccreditation. The Maryland Higher Education Commission also reviews teacher education programs in the state. All teacher preparation programs must collect data on a variety of indicators (e.g., "on average, 80 percent of institutions' graduates must pass the Praxis"; "institutions can provide evidence that its graduates possess skills aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards," etc.) in order to prepare for their renewal with MSDE. To date, the State Board has not used its authority to raise the bar for entry into teacher education or certification of teachers into the profession. However, the legislature just passed a bill, HB715, this session that gives MSDE the authority to approve teacher preparation programs. Previously, most approved programs were required to have national accreditation. This is a big opportunity for the state to insist on higher standards.

How Maryland Compares on Accountability

Benchmark states

Maryland's accountability system is similar to that of other states, as they all are designed to meet the ESSA guidelines. The

Maryland system diverges from the other benchmark states in a few areas, however.

School accountability:

- The weighting of academic and non-academic indicators is very different in Maryland than in the benchmark states. Maryland weights academic indicators at 65 percent of the composite score, whereas both Massachusetts and New Jersey weight these indicators at 90 and 92.5 percent. New Hampshire's weights have not been specified but its draft indicators are all academic. Maryland's weight is also the lowest among the broader group of all states that have submitted their plans, with Iowa's 74 percent weight the next lowest. For high schools, this means that the graduation rate is weighted much lower in Maryland than in other states.
- Maryland's long range goal for its schools of reducing students not meeting expectations by half by 2030 is different from the benchmark states. Given that roughly 25 to 40 percent of Maryland students now meet or exceed expectations, depending on the subject and grade level, this means that the state's goal is ultimately up to 70 percent proficiency. New Jersey's goal of 80 percent proficiency for all students is the most ambitious of the benchmark states, and far more ambitious than most states. New Hampshire is notable in setting a goal of post-secondary certification as the goal of its schools, making the goal of the system not just doing well on high school tests but ensuring that students succeed after high school.
- Maryland and Massachusetts are the only two of the benchmarks states to include a measure of 9th graders being on track as part of school accountability. This seems key in making progress on student success in high school.
- In addition, Maryland, along with New Hampshire, include college and career readiness in their accountability systems.

For Maryland, it is part of its academic achievement measure. For New Hampshire, it is its only measure of school quality and student success. The Massachusetts school quality measure is different: it is focused on the percent of students who complete advanced coursework like AP, IB and dual

enrollment options only. Massachusetts has defined a core curriculum that certifies college and career readiness but this is not part of its ESSA accountability system. New Jersey does not include a college and career readiness measure in its system either.

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**Chart 1: How States Compare on Goal Statements
For School Accountability from ESSA Plans**

State	Goal: Academic Achievement	Goal: Graduation Rate	Goal: English Language Proficiency
MA	Reduce the proficiency gap by one-third over the next six years for all student subgroups in all subjects on Next-Gen MCAS	Increase overall and subgroup four-year graduation rates by 5 percentage points and reduce the graduation gap for all student subgroups by 29 percent by 2020	Reduce students not making satisfactory progress toward proficiency (calculated using an algorithm set by the ACCESS exam) by 50 percent by 2022.
NH	65% of 25-63 year olds have a high quality post-secondary credential by 2025; 74 percent proficiency in English and 54 percent proficiency in mathematics by 2025 for all students (SBAC Level 3 or higher, or proficient on the Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE).	Four-year graduation rate of 93 percent by 2025	Did not set a goal yet because baseline data does not exist
NJ	By 2030, have 80 percent of all students and subgroups meet or exceed expectations on PARCC (4 or 5 score)	95 percent four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and subgroups by 2030	By 2023, 86 percent of English learners will achieve satisfactory progress toward proficiency (defined as a composite score of 4.5 on ACCESS assessment)
MD	Reduce by half the number of students who are not meeting expectations by 2030 (4 or 5 on PARCC)	4-year graduation rate of 88.5% and a 5-year graduation rate of 90% by 2020	Reduce by half the number of students not reaching proficiency (defined as a score of 5.0 on ACCESS assessment) within 6 years by 2030

Chart 2: Top Performing States and Maryland: School Accountability Academic and Non-Academic Indicators in ESSA Plans

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
<p>MD</p> <p>(NOTE: Plan is in draft form and has not yet been submitted)</p> <p>Schools would be rated on a five-star scale.</p>	<p>Elementary/ Middle School</p>	<p>Total Weight: 65%</p> <p>Academic Achievement (20%): Performance Composite on PARCC ELA and mathematics (4 or 5)</p> <p>Academic Progress (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in ELA and mathematics (25%); • Credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of grade students earning passing grades in social studies, fine arts, physical education and health, and 8th grade students earning passing grades in ELA, math, science and social studies; and passing MISA in science and Maryland EOC exam in social studies <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (10%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 35%</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic absenteeism (15%); • Climate survey (10%); • Access to a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of 5th or 8th grade students enrolled in science, social studies, fine arts, physical education, health and, for middle school only, computational learning
	<p>High School</p>	<p>Total Weight: 65%</p> <p>Academic Achievement (20%): Performance Composite on PARCC ELA and mathematics (4 or 5)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (10%)</p> <p>Readiness for Postsecondary Success (20%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-track in 9th grade (10%); • Credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of students graduating with one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AP score of 3 or higher, ○ IB score of 4 or higher, ○ SAT math score of 530+ and reading score of 480+, ○ ACT composite score of 21 or higher, ○ Dual enrollment credit, ○ Meeting University of Maryland entry requirements, ○ CTE industry certification, ○ Minimum score on ASVAB, ○ A Maryland Certificate for Program Completion (for students with special needs) who have entered the world of work or higher education. <p>Graduation Rate (15%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 35%</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic absenteeism (15%); • Climate survey (10%); • Access to a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of students graduating who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrolled in an AP or IB course, ○ Enrolled in dual enrollment, ○ Completed a CTE concentration, ○ Enrolled in a general core high school course (for special education students pursuing a Certificate of Program Completion only).

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
<p>MA Based on an index of 1-100, schools fall into one of six performance tiers.</p>	<p>Elementary/ Middle School <i>with</i> Measureable English Learner Group</p>	<p>Total Weight: 95% Academic Achievement (60%) Academic Progress (25%) English Language Proficiency (10%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 5% School Quality or Student Success (5%): Chronic absenteeism</p>
	<p>Elementary/ Middle School <i>without</i> Measureable English Learner Group</p>	<p>Total Weight: 95% Academic Achievement (70%) Academic Progress (25%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 5% School Quality or Student Success (5%): Chronic absenteeism</p>
	<p>High School <i>with</i> Measureable English Learner Group</p>	<p>Total Weight: 92.5% Academic Achievement (50%): Grade 10 ELA, math and science Next-Gen MCAS Academic Progress (20%) English Language Proficiency (5%) Graduation Rate (17.5%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 7.5% School Quality or Student Success (7.5%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic absenteeism; • Success in grade 9 courses; • Successful completion of “broad and challenging coursework” (measured as percentage of students successfully completing AP, IB, or Honors courses)
	<p>High School <i>without</i> Measureable English Learner Group</p>	<p>Total Weight: 92.5% Academic Achievement (50%): Grade 10 ELA, mathematics and science Next-Gen MCAS Academic Progress (25%) Graduation Rate (17.5%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 7.5% School Quality or Student Success (7.5%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic absenteeism; • Success in grade 9 courses; • Successful completion of “broad and challenging coursework” (measured as percentage of students successfully completing AP, IB, or Honors courses)

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
<p>NH (NOTE: Plan is in draft form and has not yet been submitted.)</p> <p>All indicators will be reported on an index scale of 1-4</p>	<p>Elementary/ Middle School</p>	<p>Weights not yet specified</p> <p>Academic Achievement: Smarter Balanced and PACE (NH competency assessment) performance levels will be reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p> <p>Academic Progress</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success: Mean Student Growth Percentile (MGP) for the lowest-achieving quartile of students, reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p>	<p>None: All elementary and middle school measures are based in test scores.</p>
	<p>High School</p>	<p>Weights not yet specified</p> <p>Academic Achievement: SAT and PACE performance levels will be reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress</p> <p>Graduation Rate</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success: Career Readiness (CCR): Graduating seniors achieve CCR if they meet two of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NH Scholars Standard, STEM or Arts program of study; • Grade of C or better in dual-enrollment course; SAT scores at or above CCR benchmark; • ACT scores at or above CCR benchmark; • AP exam score of 3, 4, or 5; • IB exam score of 3, 4, or 5; • CTE industry-recognized credential; • NH career pathway program of study; AFQT score of Level III 	<p>None: All high school measures are based in test scores.</p>
<p>NJ New Jersey's plan would use a summative score, which represents a</p>	<p>Elementary/ Middle School</p>	<p>Total Weight: 90%</p> <p>Academic Achievement (30%): Proficiency on PARCC in ELA and mathematics (Levels 4 and 5)</p> <p>Academic Progress (40%):</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (20%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 10%</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (10%): Chronic absenteeism</p>

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
percentile rank, to rate schools.	High School	<p>Total Weight: 90%</p> <p>Academic Achievement (30%): Proficiency rates on PARCC in ELA and mathematics (grades 3-10)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (20%)</p> <p>Graduation Rate (40%)</p>	<p>Total Weight: 10%</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (10%): Chronic absenteeism</p>

Teacher and principal accountability:

- Maryland, like New Hampshire, provides an evaluation framework for teachers and principals that districts must use to design their own evaluation systems. Massachusetts and New Jersey have statewide evaluation systems whereas New Hampshire has only an optional state framework. All four systems use both teacher observations and student growth on standardized tests as components of the evaluation. Student achievement is weighted at 30 percent in New Jersey, 50 percent in Massachusetts and left to local districts to decide in New Hampshire. In Maryland, the state framework is 50 percent but there is flexibility for local districts to adjust that. In general, the focus of evaluation is on continuous improvement, with teachers using evaluation results to set goals for their own professional learning, but in each of these systems, teachers can lose their jobs as a result of persistently poor evaluation results.
- Although states are not required to identify districts for targeted support under ESSA, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Maryland identify districts with high numbers of underperforming schools and provide them with targeted professional learning opportunities. The level of support provided is most articulated and comprehensive in Massachusetts, where the best performing districts are granted considerable autonomy to innovate, and

the lowest performing are put into receivership by the state.

For teacher education:

- All the states studied have a statewide body responsible for teacher preparation program approval. Reaccreditation takes place every five to seven years. Historically, almost all programs are reapproved. Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Maryland have recently proposed ways to begin making the program approval process more rigorous: tying teacher candidates’ performance on exit assessments to program approval in Massachusetts, ensuring that programs provide sustained clinical experiences with diverse populations as a condition of program approval in Maryland, and launching a statewide report card with a range of indicators for teacher preparation programs in New Jersey.

Benchmark international jurisdictions

The accountability systems in the international jurisdictions are markedly different from those in any U.S. state. In general, they are much less mechanistic: none of the systems have such detailed formulas for exactly how teacher, school leader or school quality is measured. And none rely primarily, or to such a large extent, on test scores. Instead, they provide supports for teachers and school leaders who lack experience and to schools that are not high performing. For teachers and school leaders, the accountability system is tied to

the national career ladder, in jurisdictions where those exists. This is the case in Singapore and Shanghai. Support is often done by formally or informally relying on master teachers and school leaders for mentoring. New teachers have multiple years of mentoring in Singapore, Shanghai and Ontario. In Shanghai and Singapore, highly experienced school leaders mentor school leaders of struggling schools. In addition, there is much less focus on identifying individuals who are “low-performing” as so much of school organization and management relies on collaboration among teachers. Teachers are assessed on how well they help their peers succeed or contribute to the improvement of the whole school. Schools with high concentrations of struggling students are given extra teachers and the most experienced teachers. As mentioned in the analysis for Building Block 5, helping struggling schools improve helps teachers and school leaders advance in their careers.

In addition, teacher education is much more tightly controlled in the international jurisdictions. As described in Building Block 5, teacher preparation programs are held to rigorous standards for program content, the quality of instruction, and criteria for entering and exiting the programs. International jurisdictions can and do exercise their authority for program approval to control for quality, such as when Finland closed all of its teacher preparation programs and reopened them in just eight research universities. Furthermore, they use province or nationwide policy to set and update requirements for program content, such as when Ontario doubled the length of the required practicum to 80 days for all candidates.

Recommendations for Maryland:

1. The state should consider whether and how it should create some governmental mechanism that will enable it to coordinate the development and implementation of a carefully designed plan for the development of Maryland’s people that cuts across the responsibilities of many Maryland agencies and departments of government. No jurisdiction that NCEE knows of anywhere has produced world-class outcomes for students without the capacity to develop and implement highly aligned plans that cut across the jurisdictions of what are now completely independent Maryland agencies.
2. Whether or not Maryland creates a new body to provide direction and coordination for its education and training activities, the state should consider what institutional arrangement would be appropriate for oversight of the implementation of the plan against goals and milestones and for periodic reporting of progress against the goals. This oversight should provide for recommendations on measures to be considered by the legislature to address shortfalls in implementation of the plan. Oversight should emphasize assessments of progress toward the state’s college and career readiness goals for vulnerable students.
3. Maryland’s accountability system is now structured with an array of outcomes and measures which do not convey a clear picture of what Maryland really wants for its students. NCEE recommends that, if the state adopts the college and career ready qualification system recommended and discussed at earlier meetings, the attainment of that qualification by Maryland students before they graduate from high school be made the touchstone of the accountability system. It does not

matter what the school climate is or what the graduation rate is if the graduates are ready for neither college or career. The reporting system, once the new system is in place, should be focused on what proportion of students, by group, are college and career ready by the end of 10th grade, by the end of 11th grade and by the end of 12th grade. It should also focus on the progress made toward these goals year-to-year. The new qualification is meant to be the threshold of achievement that all but a few students in all schools are supposed to meet. In addition—not instead of reporting on the qualification—schools should report on what happens in high school after the qualification is received, including the proportion of students who achieve external diplomas (e.g., AP, IB and Cambridge), industry-recognized occupational certificates, and credit for college level courses.

4. If Maryland wants to build a professional workforce in its schools on par with the best in the world, it needs to redesign its accountability systems to put much less emphasis on personal accountability for student success and much more emphasis on creating a work environment more like that of high status professionals in other occupations. That system of accountability would use progress up a career ladder to create incentives for constant improvement of skills and expertise in ever-widening arenas and on accountability to peers as well as to supervisors. Therefore, we recommend that Maryland redesign its accountability system so that, as it makes the transition to a full career

ladder system providing strong incentives to teachers and school administrators to improve their performance, more emphasis is put on all the measures advocated by the Commission for improving the quality of both teachers and school leaders. Less emphasis is put on evaluation of school personnel for the purpose of getting rid of poor performers. More emphasis is put on implementing systems in which strong school faculty will hold weak school faculty accountable for their performance. Inspection teams, not algorithms, are used to decide which schools are underperforming and what needs to be done to improve their performance. Strong educators are given incentives to help weaker educators improve their skills.

5. Use the report of this Commission as the centerpiece to stimulate a conversation about Maryland's economic goals and the kind of education system that Maryland needs to achieve those goals. The goal would be to develop deeper understanding of the dynamics of the global economy and advancing automation and, based on that understanding, a broad consensus to support the agenda being developed by the Commission that will outlast any particular administration or the program of any one party. The state should be prepared to amend the plan adopted in response to the Commission's proposals in light of the results of this process. The product should be a five- to ten-year plan that has very broad support in Maryland.