

Policy Area 5

Governance and Accountability

Policy Area:

A structure will be put in place to oversee this new system, monitor its implementation, and hold government agencies at all levels accountable for implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

Element Detail 5a

Element: Independent oversight body to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate implementation of the Commission's recommendations as enacted into law, with the body ceasing to function at the end of the implementation period.

1. The oversight body must have the authority to require other State agencies and local school systems to respond to its requests for information, changes to policies or implementation plans, and recommendations to withhold funding. The membership of the oversight body will include Maryland stakeholders and experts in education policy.
2. The oversight body, including its chairman, will be chosen by the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.
3. The Chairman of the oversight body will have the authority needed to organize the work of the body as he or she sees fit and the oversight body will have an executive director and a relatively small staff (approximately 10 people);
4. The oversight body will:
 - a) In consultation with the agencies charged with implementing the requirements in the enabling legislation, develop a detailed master schedule and strategic plan for implementation;
 - b) Monitor implementation of the strategic plan against the master schedule, coordinate between agencies, and work with the respective agencies to resolve implementation issues as they arise;
 - c) Contract, as necessary, with independent experts to gather and analyze data that reflects how the strategic plan is being implemented and its

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effects on student performance over time as measured by a wide range of appropriate variables; assist those contracted experts in securing the necessary data from Maryland State agencies, including the authority to investigate whether local education agencies or schools are making sufficient progress;

- d) Report progress annually to the Governor, legislature, and the public; describe implementation problems as they arise, and make recommendations as to changes in legislation, including in appropriations and accountability, that might be needed to increase the probability that the strategic plan will meet the objectives of the enabling legislation on schedule;
- e) Review and approve plans and related instruments submitted by the key agencies responsible for implementing the strategic plan, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Option 1: The criteria to be used to determine the release of a portion of State funding that is conditioned on the approval of State agency and LEA strategic plans for the use of those funds that is consistent with the Commission's recommendation and the process to be used to determine whether those criteria have been met, including for the release of those funds in subsequent years based on implementation performance; and
 - 2. Option 2: Option 1 above plus, for LEA plans, MSDE and the State Board of Education will make a recommendation to the oversight body regarding whether a plan should be approved and whether conditions have been met for release of funds and the oversight body will make the final decision (this likely requires a larger staff).
 - 3. Plans to expand pre-K for low-income 3-year olds and all 4-year olds and to monitor the school readiness of students entering kindergarten;
 - 4. Plans to expand the network of Judy Centers and Family Resource Centers to serve families with children age 0-5 in high poverty communities;
 - 5. Criteria that must be met by collaboratives of districts and teacher preparation programs seeking to strengthen teacher preparation and induction as recommended by the Commission;
 - 6. Criteria to be used to approve plans from districts for State funds to implement their career ladder systems;
 - 7. The MSDE plan for the use of inspection teams charged with supporting struggling schools, including the data and criteria to be used to determine which schools will be inspected, the inspection schedule, the scope of the inspection, the criteria for selecting inspectors and the powers and responsibilities

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- of the inspectors;
 - 8. State plan to ensure all students reaching the Career and College Readiness (CCR) standard have access to post-CCR programs that prepare them for admission to selective colleges or for technical credentials leading to good jobs; and/or to complete college credits while in high school;
 - 9. State plan to review CCR standard against international benchmark periodically (starting in year 5) to ensure Maryland students are competitive with their peers in top-performing countries;
 - 10. State plan to develop rigorous CTE pathways including meaningful workplace experiences leading to industry-recognized credentials; and
 - 11. State plan for training Maryland teachers, school leaders, administrators, and school boards on the Commission's recommendations.
- f) The oversight body will coordinate the State's participation in the OECD's PISA survey program.
- 5. The oversight body will contract for an evaluation of the implementation of the Commission's recommendations at the mid-point and end of the implementation period, including the use of additional funding to meet the goals, progress toward the goals and whether the goals have been achieved, and any recommendations to alter the goals or strategies to reach the goals.
 - 6. The body will sunset at the end of the implementation period specified in the enabling legislation.

Element Detail 5b

Element: MSDE will track the progress of students in each Maryland school, as a whole and by subgroup, on their progress toward the CCR endorsement using statewide accountability tests.

1. MSDE will use State accountability data to identify schools in which most students or groups of vulnerable students, are not making adequate progress toward achieving CCR by the end of Grade 10 and organize inspection teams of leading principals, master teachers and other experts to visit those schools to analyze the problems preventing adequate student progress toward the CCR standards and issue recommendations to the school board, the community and the State for actions needed to current those problems.
2. The local school board and community will review the inspection team's recommendations and identify those it will implement, which may include recommendations that require State action. Only after a designated period of time has passed and if sufficient progress has not been made, then the State may require a school to implement specific recommendations of the inspection team.
3. Among the recommendations that might be made by these inspection teams to the State would be pairing the struggling school with another school with similar demographics but considerably better performance in a way that would involve the principal of the high performing school taking responsibility for sharing his or her expertise and that of his or staff with the faculty of the struggling school.
4. The inspection teams would also be expected to recommend, if they think such a step necessary, that the State require the school to fully implement the model State curriculum in detail and have its teachers trained to implement that curriculum. Many other measures may be recommended by the inspection teams.

Element Detail 5c

Element: Not less than 25 percent of all new funds available to the schools and districts will be subject initially to the approval of strategic plans to implement the Kirwan Commission recommendations and, once the program is underway, to demonstrated progress in implementing those recommendations.

1. Option 1: As outlined in Element Detail 5a, the oversight body will approve the criteria by which MSDE and the State Board of Education will judge whether plans should be approved and funds may be released; or
2. Option 2: In addition to Option 1, MSDE and the State Board of Education will make recommendations to the oversight body regarding whether funds should be released and the oversight body will make the final decision.
3. Schools and districts submitting annual plans and progress reports will be

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given an opportunity to respond to warnings from MSDE if MSDE is considering rejecting their plans before those plans are declared non-responsive and funds are denied.

4. The State may decide to send an inspection team to a school for an on-site analysis and report before withholding a portion of new funds or, after withholding funds, to assess the likelihood that a new plan will work. In either case, the State will ask the inspection team to assess whether a submitted plan is sufficiently responsive to the problems at the school to warrant the release of the sequestered funds.
5. It is the intention of the Commission that not less than 75 percent of enrollment-based formula funds available to the district flow down to the school for use by the faculty of the school to educate the children in that school.