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## THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

### Del. Alonzo Washington's Kirwan Commission Recommendations

Working Group 2 – High Quality Teachers & Leaders (Recommendations made to Working Group 2 Elements Final Draft document dated 11/20/18)

1. **On page 6 of the Working Group 2 Elements, Element 2c, in Design Assumption 1, Section (a)(ii)(1), the working group should strike “3.3” and add “3.0”.** Reducing the GPA requirement for the Maryland Teaching Fellows Scholarship will ensure that there is parity in the Program requirements for white and minority students. According to MSDE, 58% of white students completed high school with a GPA greater than a 3.0 in 2017 while only 17.77% of black students and 25.82% of Hispanic students completed high school with a GPA great than a 3.0. Additionally, I am unclear on if there was any data to support setting the GPA requirement at 3.3 when the Scholarship Program was initially established.
2. **On page 6 of the Working Group 2 Elements, Element 2c, in Design Assumption 1, the working group should add a Section (e) “MHEC shall establish a goal to award 35% of the Maryland Teaching Fellows Scholarships each year to minority students.”** Unlike many other jurisdictions in the United States, Maryland has no state scholarship programs that specifically target minority students for teacher recruitment. By designating a percentage of the Maryland Teaching Fellows Scholarships for minority students, the Commission will demonstrate its commitment to recruiting teachers of color, which numerous studies have shown will improve the educational outcomes of students of color.
3. **On page 6 of the Working Group 2 Elements, Element 2c, in Design Assumption 3, the working group should add “including developing and implementing in person, print, digital, and social media advertising outreach and recruitment campaigns at Maryland HBCUs.”** Other teacher recruitment programs, such as Teach for America, have proven that direct advertising campaigns at HBCUs increases the probability that students of color will apply to their programs.

#### Dr. Toldson's Recommendations

I strongly support all the observations and recommendations Dr. Toldson presented in his report to the Kirwan Commission on December 3, 2018. **I specifically support Recommendations 3 & 4 he submitted for Working Group 2's elements related to cultural competency training and development for teachers and principals and would expand them to include cultural**

**competency training for all school personnel and support staff.** This requirement would be similar to the implicit bias and cultural competency training mandated for SRO's through SB1265.

I also contacted Dr. Toldson for clarification on how Working Group 2's elements present the issue of cultural competency. He provided the following response:

“Design assumption 1b is the most direct statement dealing with racial awareness and cultural competence among teachers. However, the statement speaks to "future teachers," and not existing teachers. The statement implies that the state will monitor or regulate teacher's pre-service academic preparation, which does not seem practical. And does not indicate that the state will monitor or regulate the continued professional development in racial and cultural competence of existing teachers.

The statement that follows "teaching diverse communities" includes, in parentheses, low performance and high poverty, but does not mention race.

The statement on supplemental professional development opportunities, it's a little confusing to me, because it ties teachers' professional development to national board certification, which would seem to limit the breadth and depth of any cultural competence trainings for teachers.

On a practical level, certain stakeholders reading this working group report will want to know some basic questions, which the report does not adequately address:

1. Will 'existing' teachers in the state of Maryland be required to develop the skills necessary to teach in culturally diverse classrooms? If so, how?
2. What are the specific topics teachers should learn to effectively teach culturally diverse students (e.g. implicit bias, culturally relevant pedagogy)?
3. What steps are the state taking to appropriately deal with teachers who exhibit racism or racial biases in the classroom that impact learning outcomes for students with diverse backgrounds?"