

THOMAS V. MIKE MILLER, JR.  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



MICHAEL E. BUSCH  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
STATE HOUSE  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

December 18, 2018

Dr. William E. Kirwan  
Chair, Maryland Commission on Innovation  
and Excellence in Education  
90 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Dr. Kirwan:

We want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for the very hard work that we know you, the Commission, and Commission staff have been doing over the past two years to develop policy and funding recommendations that will transform Maryland's education system into a world-class system and will allow Maryland and its citizens to successfully compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy. We are aware that the Commission is in the final stages of finalizing its policy recommendations and the estimated total cost to implement the policies over an implementation period.

We look forward to receiving the Commission's report in January 2019, including funding priorities for fiscal 2020 and a policy blueprint that could be outlined in legislation this session. With the time remaining before the Legislative Session begins, we understand that, while the Commission will make significant policy and funding recommendations in its 2018 report, it will not be able to complete the funding formulas that will distribute the increased education aid between the State and local jurisdictions. In truth, it would be very difficult for the General Assembly to complete work on both the policy framework of the Commission's recommendations and a funding formula distributing the costs between the state and the jurisdictions in a single 90 day session. We also understand that many of the policies represent a significantly different way of approaching the education system and will require time for the State and local school systems among others to develop implementation plans and training for educators and outreach to the public to convey the vision for the pre K-12 education system that the Commission is proposing.

With the recent public statements from the Chief Executive on the Commission's work, it appears that we have more work to do to convince the Governor that these generational changes are worth undertaking. Given the breadth of the Commission's charge and the rigor and

thoroughness with which the Commission has addressed its charge, we understand that it is virtually impossible for the formulas to be completed in time for action during the 2019 Legislative Session. The work of the Commission is too important to rush through without something so critical as funding formulas that will ensure that the debate in the General Assembly is backed by the best data available. We believe that the Commission's recommendations have the potential to transform Maryland's pre K-12 education system into among the best in the world and provide our children with the opportunity to fulfill their greatest potential for themselves and for this State. We are committed to seeing it happen; quite frankly, we view it as our legacy to the State.


To that end, we would like the Commission to continue its work in 2019 to develop funding formulas that would implement the Commission's funding recommendations. Specifically, we ask that you recommend membership for a small working group to work with staff to review and develop formula recommendations to be considered by the full Commission in fall 2019.

Again, thank you for the time and energy that you and your fellow commissioners have devoted to the Commission's work. Like you, we believe it is well worth the effort – nothing is more important than the future for our children.

Sincerely,



Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.  
President of the Senate



Michael E. Busch  
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