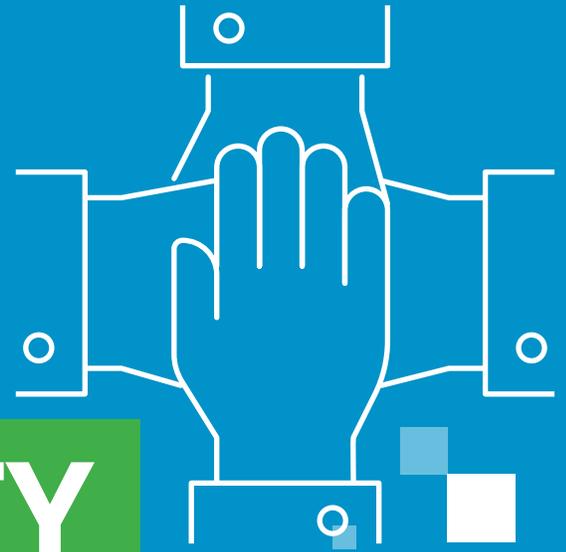


STRENGTHENING EDUCATION IN MARYLAND  
ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS 2018



# BECAUSE OPPORTUNITY BELONGS TO EVERYONE



# A bright future does not belong to the few. It belongs to **all of us.**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is unwavering in pursuing the goal of equity and excellence for Maryland students. It is this goal that propels us to support and enhance ongoing initiatives, as well as pursuing new innovations. All of our resources are being leveraged to produce results, ranging from the launching of major initiatives to the commitment of making small improvements in operations every single day.

Early childhood education is key to a student's success. We deliver early intervention services to children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families from birth through age four. Children benefit from MSDE licensing and supports to childcare providers and centers. Judy Centers served 15,401 children ages birth to five years old. Maryland EXCELS (Excellence Counts in Early Learning Age Care) recently added its 300th early childhood program in Level 5, the highest level of quality. Over 250 educators attended the MSDE/Ready At Five School Readiness Symposium, Supporting the Whole Child: Social and Emotional Learning.

Good teachers are essential to student achievement. The MSDE supports the effort to bring quality teachers to Maryland. Local systems have benefited from our commitment to evidence based practices. We are providing training, program evaluation, staff expertise and professional development on a regional basis.

We have received approval of Maryland's Every Student Succeeds Act Consolidated Plan from the United States Department of Education and will be implementing the plan in the 2018 - 2019 school year. Our communications office will be working with all stakeholders to assist with understanding the MSDE Accountability Report Card and plan.

Important initiatives have been implemented to include: the Lead Higher initiative resulting in 1,100 more students

of color and low income signing up to take Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) courses next year compared to this year. Career and Technology offerings have expanded across the State. A plan for improving local implementation of Gifted and Talented identification and services is being developed. Focus on improvement of low performing schools continues through root cause analysis, professional development and analysis of data to identify and target areas of need, in order to improve student achievement across the State. This year MSDE applied for and received over \$100 million in grants—Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy, Javits Gifted & Talented and Charter School—all of these grant funds are available to local school systems.

The events of the past year have increased public awareness about the importance of safety policies and mental health resources in our schools, and confirm our commitment to these areas. I am confident that the MSDE is positioned to positively impact these challenges.

Please take a few minutes to review our accomplishments during the 2017 - 2018 school year. I am confident that we are progressing in the right direction. Our momentum is accelerating, but we do not work in isolation. I am encouraged by what I have observed during my visits to each of the 24 school systems this year. Working together with all of our stakeholders, we are opening the doors to new ideas and ways of thinking that elevate and enhance student achievement.

Looking forward, the dedicated staff of MSDE will continue this journey with enthusiasm, guided by the goal of student success and driven by the promise and potential in every one of Maryland's students.

*Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.*

**KAREN B. SALMON, Ph.D.**  
MARYLAND STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools, meets with two student performers at the inaugural Best of Maryland Arts Education Festival, a one-day event held in Baltimore that celebrates the impact of arts education in Maryland.

# Establishing a Strong Foundation

Early childhood development programs sow the seeds of learning throughout life. MSDE places a particular focus on our youngest learners, offering innovative support and licensing for child care providers, professional development for early childhood educators, and a better understanding of the learning process.

Detailed Division Accomplishments:

DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD // 1

DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION/EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES // 2



## BEGINNING EARLY PAYS DIVIDENDS LATER

DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION / EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

By working with families and students from an early age, educators can give every child a terrific start and the tools to reach their highest potential. Through supporting programs such as the We C.A.R.E Event, our Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services helps to ensure that every student has access to the resources they need. We C.A.R.E stands for Community Awareness and Resource Extravaganza and aims to provide resources for families that have a child with a disability.



## GAUGING STUDENT READINESS

DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Maryland is learning how to better serve its youngest students by assessing their work as they enter kindergarten. Maryland's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is an observational and assessment tool administered to kindergarteners that helps measure school readiness across four domains: social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics and physical well-being and motor development.



## SPARKING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Families serve an essential part of a student's educational growth. Parents, grandparents, older siblings- all can provide part of a child's educational process. The newly published Family Engagement Framework Toolkit provides ideas and best practices to help childcare providers better work with the families they serve.



## SUPPORTING OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS

DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Division of Early Childhood and the Center for Early Childhood Education and Intervention at the University of Maryland at College Park have developed a new digital curriculum for 4 year-olds linked to the early learning standards, based on principles of project-based inquiry, integrated across content areas, and incorporating evidence-based practices. Piloting of the completed curriculum, Children Study Their World, will occur during school year 2018-19, with 83 public school and community based Preschool Development Grantee classrooms participating. Participants will be provided with supporting children's books, math manipulatives, and an Apple tablet to support the units. A family resource application to support children's learning of the curriculum is also being developed.

“CCSSO is proud to partner with the National Governors Association to support Maryland and other states as they strengthen the quality of early childhood education and increase access to these important opportunities for all families.”

**CARISSA MOFFAT MILLER** / Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)  
Announcing Maryland's selection to be part of a project to strengthen the Early Childhood Education workforce.

# Elevating Educational Outcomes

All children can—and must—learn. MSDE continues to raise expectations for over 890,000 students involved in learning at our 1,400 public schools.

Implementing Career and College Ready standards, strengthening educator preparation, improving assessments, and providing targeted assistance to schools are all part of our multi-faceted drive to better prepare students.

Detailed Division Accomplishments:

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY // 3

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS // 5

OFFICE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT // 10



## BRINGING EDUCATORS TOGETHER

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

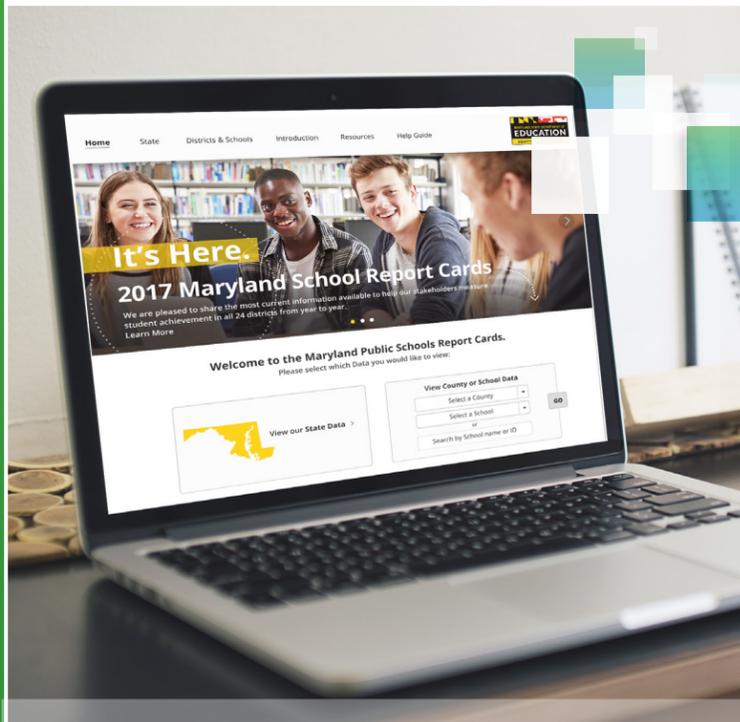
The Maryland State Department of Education continues to find opportunities to convene groups of teachers and leaders, including the Learning Summit, EdCamp, and a host of other gatherings. We learn more when we learn together.



## UPDATING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

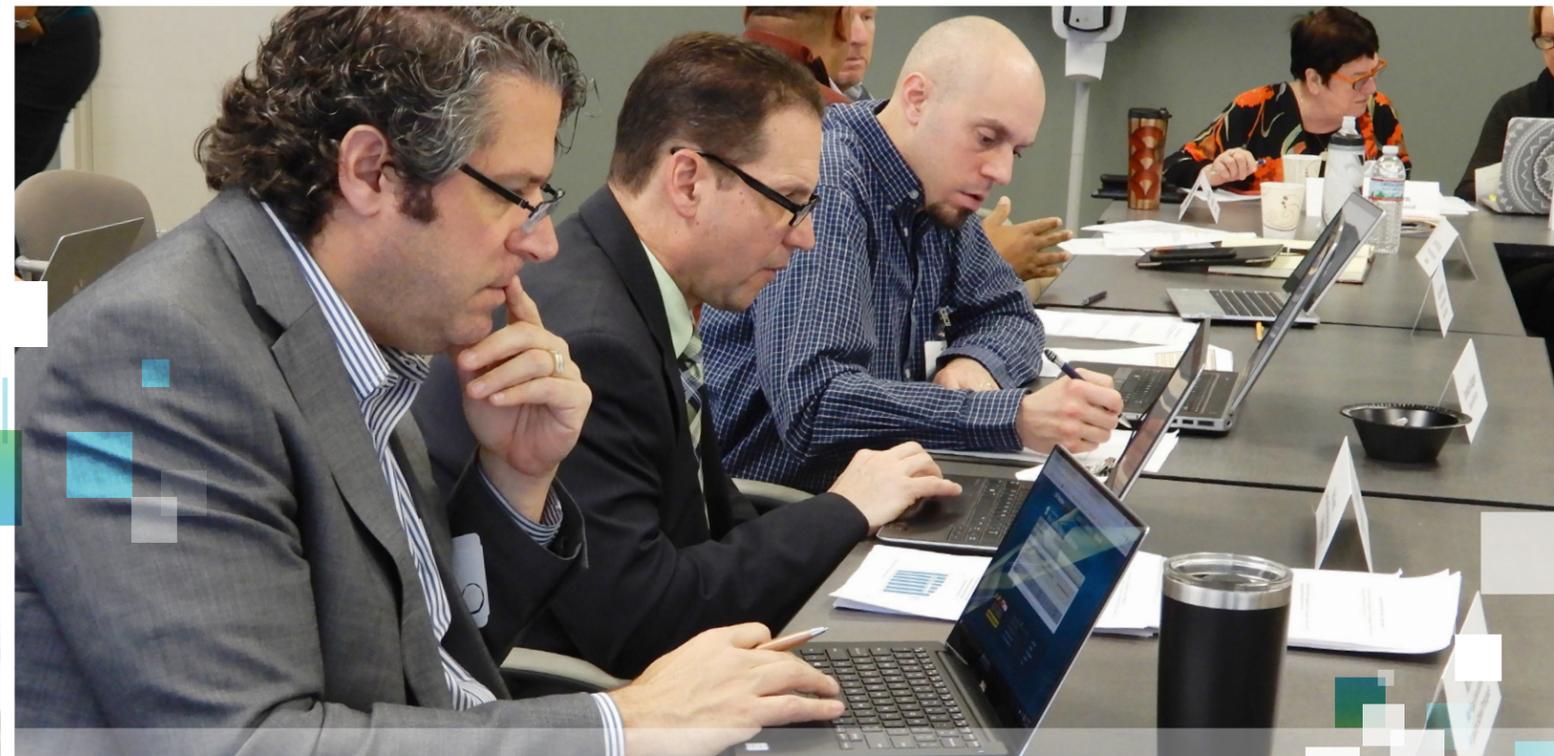
The Maryland High School graduation requirements have not been updated in decades. The Maryland High School Graduation Task Force, co-chaired by Carol Williamson and Dara Shaw, will change all of this. Members are currently meeting bi-monthly to develop recommendations for the State Board of Education to consider.



## BUILDING A BETTER REPORT CARD

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY & OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

A new MdReportCard.org site, set to debut later in 2018, will provide educators, parents, and students with more information about how their school and school system is doing, all in an easy to follow format.



“We’re impressed with Maryland’s unique and sustained approach to professional learning systems as a means to improve outcomes for all students, and look forward to facilitating its next step toward excellence.”

**STEPHANIE HIRSH** / Executive Director, Learning Forward  
Announcing Maryland’s involvement in the new “What Matters Now” Network.

# Elevating Educational Outcomes



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

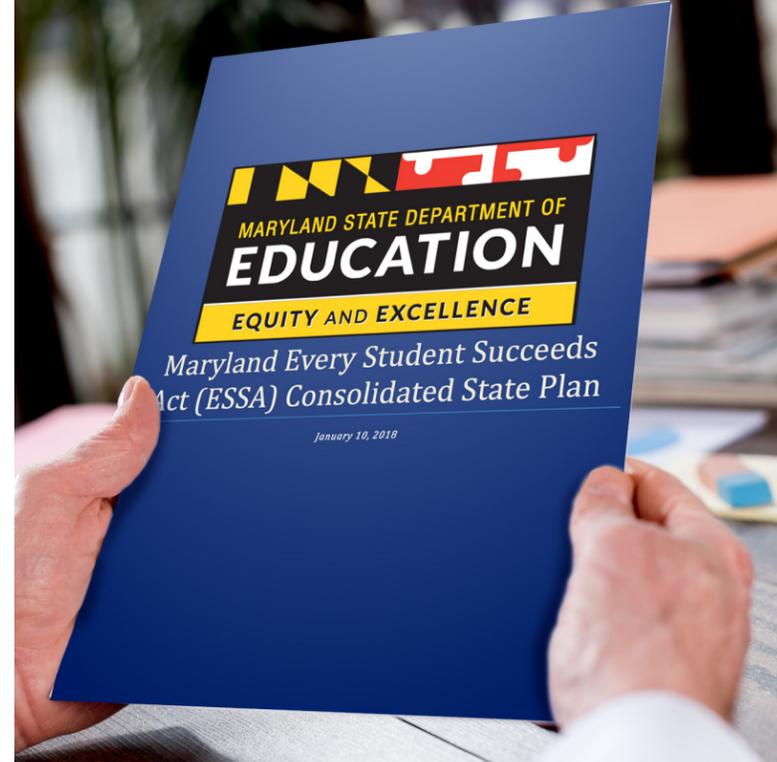
For more than 50 years, the Maryland Summer Center Program for Gifted and Talented Students has attracted learners from across the State to a thrilling variety of high-level experiences, from STEM to the arts.



## PREPARING NEW TEACHERS

DIVISION OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

The May 2018 Maryland Professional Development Schools Network Conference, hosted by MSDE and the University of MD Baltimore County, is designed to unite educators in sharing innovative practices, novel ideas and outstanding accomplishments. Better prepared teachers mean better prepared students.



## POINTING TO THE FUTURE

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

The US Department of Education in January approved Maryland's plan to meet the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Under ESSA, Maryland set into motion goals for improving student learning, strengthening the educator workforce, and providing information to parents, educators and the public.

## IMPROVING ADVANCED PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Through the Lead Higher Initiative, Maryland is making certain that more students from traditionally underrepresented students are able to take the rigorous Advanced Placement tests, which puts them on track for the college experience.



## STRENGTHENING STRUGGLING SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Maryland State Department of Education experts are working in direct partnership with educators at several Baltimore City schools, providing technical assistance and advice designed to turn schools in a positive direction. To kick-off this partnership, a two-day improvement strategy summit was held in Baltimore City where department staff, like Director of Leadership Development and School Improvement Tiara Dwyer, shared their expertise.



# Improving Fitness And Health

Maryland schools succeed the most when they help provide the bedrock for a healthy lifestyle. Better nutrition, strong health education, competitive athletics, and the tools to help lead a life free of substance abuse are all part of today's educational programs.

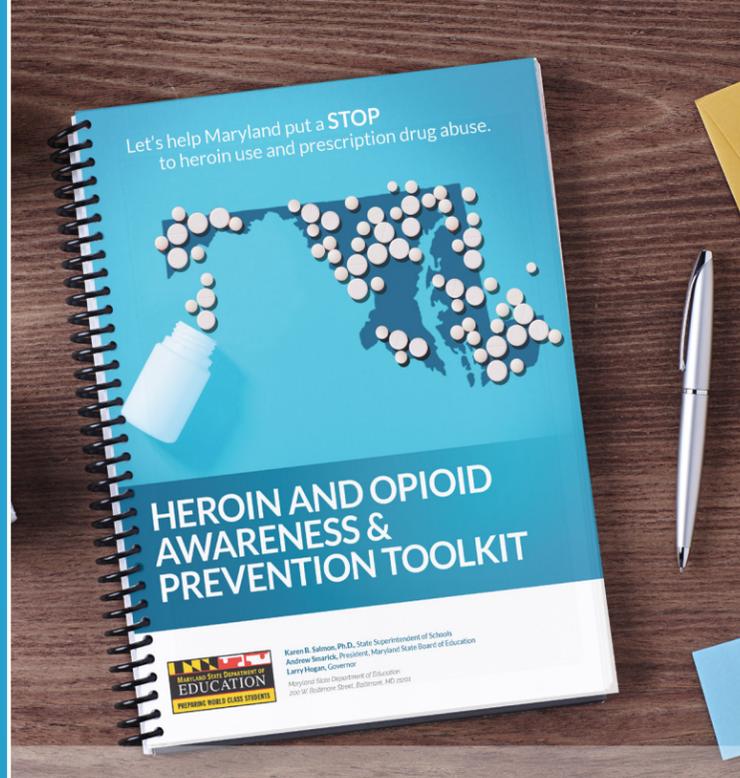
Detailed Division Accomplishments:

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY // 3

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT // 7

OFFICE OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS // 12

MARYLAND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION // 13



## TARGETING THE SCOURGE OF OPIOID ABUSE

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

MSDE has made heroin and other opioid use and abuse a special priority over the past year. MSDE's Heroin and Opioid Awareness and Prevention Toolkit has been embraced by several States as an effective weapon against abuse. MSDE has helped distribute Naloxone to schools throughout the State. Staff have been providing professional development and technical assistance to educators and health professionals on an ongoing basis.



## HIGHLIGHTING MENTAL HEALTH FOR BETTER HEALTH

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

The Maryland State Board of Education's Mental Health Subcommittee, working in tandem with MSDE staff, has put an important spotlight on concerns about student mental health. The result: a public awareness campaign and a new collection of web resources, which have been accessed by schools throughout the State.



## IMPROVING NUTRITION MEANS SMARTER KIDS

OFFICE OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Through such long-standing programs as Maryland Meals for Achievement and the Summer Meals Program, to more recent initiatives such as Homegrown School Lunch Week, MSDE's School and Community Nutrition Program serves thousands of students and adults each day. More than 450 public and nonpublic schools participated in the Maryland Meals for Achievement program in 2017-18. Maryland hosted a special statewide kick-off event at Crellin Elementary School in Garrett County to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week.



## KEEPING MINDS IN MOTION

MARYLAND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (MPSSAA)

The MPSSAA keep athletes moving on and off the field through various community projects, events, and scholarship opportunities. Two such scholarship programs/partnerships are the The Wendy's® High School Heisman® Scholarship and the Minds in Motion program, both honor students who make learning a priority while still participating in interscholastic sports. Mr. Ian McGrory, a senior at Queen Anne's County High School, was selected as one of 10 National Finalists for The Wendy's® High School Heisman® Scholarship.

“In searching for excellent resources for both pediatricians and parents (on heroin and opioid prevention), your toolkit was one of the best we reviewed.”

| DELLE M. BLAIR / Program Manager, Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

# Shaping A Safe Learning Environment

Students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach without an educational environment free from harm and conducive to instruction. From the bus systems that transport our children to schools, to the buildings where learning takes place, MSDE is paying attention to the details that are designed for success.

Detailed Division Accomplishments:

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT // 7

OFFICE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES // 13

MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY // 14

OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES // 12



## HELPING STUDENTS ARRIVE SAFELY

OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

This year, MSDE produced a new bus safety video, outlining the importance of proper pick-up and delivery of students, as well as how other drivers must respect school bus stop arms. The video was featured across MSDE digital platforms and resulted in thousands of views. It was shown at the conference for the National Association of Pupil Transportation, as well as the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.



## LISTENING TO STUDENTS

DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

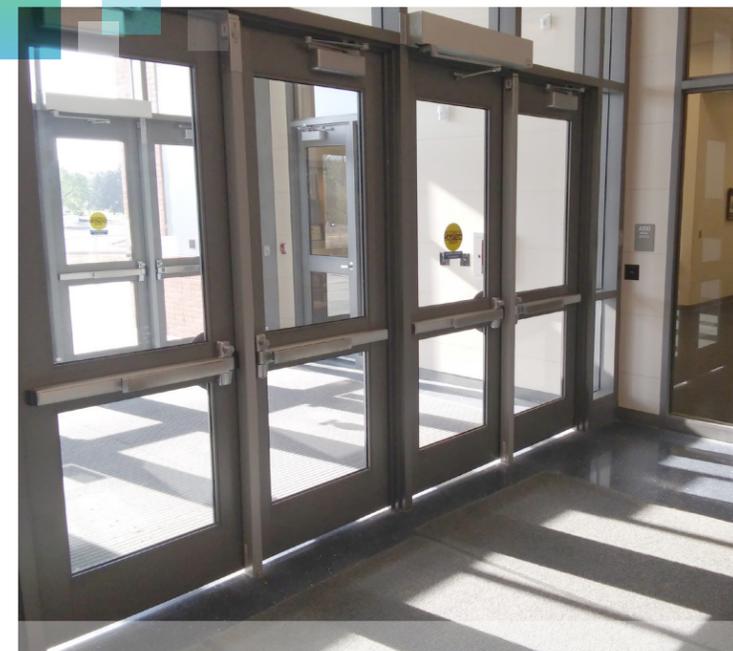
Dozens of Maryland high school students met with legislators in Annapolis this spring as part of the School Safety Forum sponsored by the Maryland Association of Student Councils. Students were able to hold in depth discussions with local delegates and legislators addressing concerns such as mental health, gun violence, and school safety.



## HONORING OUR HEROES

MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

The Maryland Center for School Safety, a joint program from the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland State Police, drew more than 300 educators and law enforcement personnel to the Annapolis National Guard Armory in April. The conference was held in the wake of the shooting at Great Mills High School in St. Mary's County. During the conference, the State took time to honor Blaine Gaskill, the School Resource Officer at Great Mills, credited with saving lives through decisive action.



## IMPROVING SCHOOL FACILITIES

OFFICE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Maryland's School Facilities Program continues to work with school systems throughout the State to help improve safety in every classroom through better construction and best practices.

“We must remain vigilant when it comes to protecting our kids. Although I believe we are ahead of the nation, we must do more. Parents deserve to know...that we are prioritizing the safety of their children.”

| GOVERNOR LARRY HOGAN

# Empowering the Workforce of the Future

To build a competitive economy, the next generation must be equipped for the jobs of tomorrow. We ensure youth have the skills, experience, and education to find a job that will support themselves and their families.



## MOVING BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

DIVISION OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Today's Career and Technology Education includes programs familiar to many – such as building trades and automotive technology – to fields sometimes not associated with secondary school programs. Among the fastest growing segments in Maryland CTE are biomedical science, engineering, and information technology.



## BUILDING CAREER READINESS

DIVISION OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Maryland public schools feature 10 career clusters in Career and Technology Education, which have attracted a growing number of students interested in the option of a clear pathway to a well-paying job. More than 23% of all 2017 Maryland High School graduates completed a CTE program of study; that's 12,458 students!



## EXPANDING AN OPPORTUNITY

DIVISION OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Maryland's innovative Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) Program, launched in partnership with IBM two years ago, has now expanded to sites in Baltimore City, Prince George's County, and Allegany County. Each program features high school training that segues directly into postsecondary education with a direct path to employment upon successful completion. Dr. Salmon visits with students at the Allegany County Center for Career & Technology Education, which began its P-TECH program in 2017.



## LINKING WITH BUSINESS

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is currently developing strong and lasting relationships with the business community. The most recent examples of these relationships are partnerships with CVS Health and Starbucks, which have both set up a training facility at the DORS' Workforce and Technology Center. Students of the program receive training in a "mock store" setting and go on to serve in an actual retail location, leaving them fully prepared to enter the workforce despite delays and disabilities.

“We build partnerships and relationships with communities to make sure that our workforce represents the communities that we serve. To see students grow and blossom at the end of the training is worth it.”

**LESLIE REIS** / Senior Manager for Workforce Development, CVS

Helping to cut the ribbon on a CVS partnership with MSDE's Division of Rehabilitation Services, preparing disabled adults for careers.

Detailed Division Accomplishments:

DIVISION OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS // 15

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES // 17

# Together We Accomplish More

Our highly respected educational program benefits from strong partnerships with our colleagues in government, the business community, foundations, and parents. We work diligently with community organizations, the media, and individuals, providing outreach and answers.

Detailed Division Accomplishments:

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS // 5

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES // 17



## CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

From its nationally successful Teacher of the Year program to its long-standing Blue Ribbon School Program, the Maryland State Department of Education takes the time to put an important spotlight on outstanding achievements. Among those honored this year: Anne Arundel's Joshua Carroll was named Maryland Teacher of the Year, Anne Arundel's Allison Felton was named as Milken National Educator, and six new National Blue Ribbon public schools were selected.



## GETTING THE WORD OUT

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Maryland State Department of Education manages a host of communication programs, providing a direct link to the news media, a suite of social media offerings accessed by the public, a vibrant video program, new publications, and a revitalized and growing website. Together, MSDE's communications programs reach thousands of interested individuals each day.



## PARTNERING WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

DIVISION OF CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS, DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES, AND THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Through academic programs such as financial literacy and P-TECH, to a variety of Statewide recognition programs, the MSDE maintains a strong link to businesses and corporations. Corporate executives often note that their firms benefit directly from stronger schools. Every year, Northrop Grumman, a main sponsor of the Teacher of the Year Program, sponsors a Teacher of the Year Retreat on Smith Island through the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Among the businesses that MSDE has partnered with in 2017-18: BGE, Comcast, CVS, Lockheed Martin, Maryland Automotive Dealers Association, McDonald's Family of Maryland, Microsoft, Northrop Grumman, One Main Financial, Starbucks, and Whiting-Turner.

## WORKING FOR ALL STUDENTS

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Karen Salmon, Maryland's State Superintendent of Schools, greets Governor Larry Hogan as Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Michael Busch look on at a bill signing on April 2018. Education is a bipartisan issue for Marylanders, and MSDE staff work closely each year with legislators and staff from other State and local governmental agencies to strengthen all schools and assist every student.



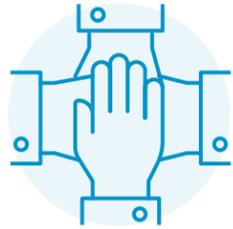
“An effective team involves many people working together, and it is not necessarily just educators. It is bringing all stakeholders together.”

JOSHUA CARROLL / Maryland's 2017-18 Teacher of the Year

# Impact At A Glance

DID YOU KNOW ?

MSDE Impacts Nearly  
1.5 Million Lives A Year



## EDUCATOR SUPPORT

**30**

workshops/trainings on Evidence Based Decision Making.

**22,000+**

certifications issued during the 2017 – 2018 school year.

**40+**

school system support site visits related to grant implementation, professional learning and school system needs/requests.



## FITNESS, HEALTH & NUTRITION

**43.2 million**

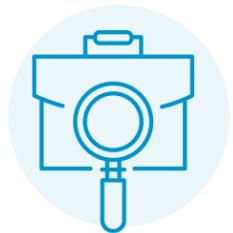
school breakfast meals served during the 2017 – 2018 school year, with funding and support through MSDE Food and Nutrition services.

**112,000**

students participated in interscholastic sports with coordination of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association and MSDE.

**1,400**

schools received Naloxone, a medication designed to reverse opioid overdose. It has already saved two lives.



## EQUIPPING STUDENTS FOR THE JOBS OF TOMORROW

**12,458**

(23.2%) of the Class of 2017 completed a Career Technology Education program of study.

**103,538**

(40.5%) of all high school students enrolled in Career Technology Education programs.

**8 PTECH**

programs are being offered in **5** local systems, that blend high school, college and work experience.



## HEALTHY MINDS

**41,515**

Minds in Motion certificates awarded to students participating in interscholastic athletics who have achieved a 3.25 grade point average.

**300+**

Health educators from every school system attended the Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention Educator Conference.

**2,300+**

individuals have been trained in Mental Health First Aid and over 250 have been trained as instructors.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD

**4,272**

four-year-olds are being served in preschool expansion grant classrooms.

**52%**

(4,492) of licensed Child Care programs are participating in Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating and Improvement System.

**9,761**

children ages birth through age four with developmental delays or disabilities received early intervention services .



## THE ARTS & EQUITY

**300+**

students from 14 school systems participated in the inaugural Best of Maryland Arts Education Festival.

**200+**

pieces of student artwork exhibited throughout the State at galleries, including the First Lady's Gallery at the House of Delegates, Treasury Building gallery, and at the MSDE offices.

**1,100**

more underrepresented students enrolled in Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses due to the Lead Higher initiative.

## DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Division of Early Childhood Development emphasizes and improves early care and early childhood education throughout the State. The division works to ensure there are safe and healthy child care programs, and that early education experiences continue to improve so that our youngest learners are ready for elementary school. The division is comprised of the Office of Child Care, the Early Learning Branch, and Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch, working together to build a foundation for Maryland's youngest learners from birth through third grade.

- The freeze on the Child Care Subsidy List was lifted by Governor Hogan for the top two tiers effective February 2018, freeing the wait list of 4,000 children. This program provides financial assistance to help eligible working families afford child care costs. The Governor also included in his Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget to increase the Child Care Subsidy Program provider reimbursement vouchers by 8 percent effective July 2018.
- The Annual Judy Center Conference, held in March 2018, attracted the largest conference yet, with a total of 131 attendees. Attendees consisted of superintendents and assistant superintendents, principals and assistant principals, teachers, MSDE staff, and Judy Center staff from across the state. The attendees received training on family engagement, mental health, trauma, and working with children of incarcerated parents. This training will be used to further the Judy Center mission of helping families and preparing children for school.
- Eight school districts have announced that they are using the Early Learning Assessment with all of their prekindergarten students.
- The Child Care Advisory Group, State Early Childhood Advisory Council, and other stakeholders provided comments during public meetings and hearings on the Child Care Development Fund State Plan during the months of March and April 2018.
- Steven Hicks was approved by the Board of Education to serve as Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Early Childhood, and Jenn Nizer was approved as Director of the Office of Child Care.
- The division helped to complete the State P-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
- The division co-hosted the Winter School Readiness Symposium, Equity in Literacy Must Start Early featuring Nell Duke with Ready At Five, an organization that aims to improve the practice and quality of early childhood education in Maryland.
- MSDE received a \$1.3 million one year Supplemental Preschool Development Grant for 2018, a grant that helps to build or enhance preschool program infrastructure and expands high-quality preschool programs in targeted communities.
- For 2017-18, additional child care programs and public schools have received State and Federal grant funds that have increased the number of four-year-olds from low income families able to participate in free grant funded PreK programs this year to 4,017.
- The division collaborated with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability to hold three two-day regional professional development opportunities for elementary principals, child care directors, and Prekindergarten-2nd grade community-based and public school teachers across the state. Educators learned about the latest brain research for young children as well as best evidenced-based instructional practices across all content areas.

### IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS- MARYLAND EXCELS

- July 2017 marked four years since the launch of the Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care and public prekindergarten programs. Quality ratings at the higher levels increased substantially from January to July 2017. Quality ratings of published programs are available online at MarylandEXCELS.org in the Find A Program portal.
- Staff participated in the 17th Annual National Conference Creating Connections in Mobile, AL in July 2017. The conference session, Using a Quality Rating and Improvement System and National Association for

Family Child Care Standards to Create Connections to Continuous Quality Care, provided an overview of the alignment between the elements of a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and the goals of accreditation and how the use of these two systems provide a pathway for program improvement.

- As of June 2017 there were 88 newly accredited child care and public prekindergarten programs. The total of Maryland accredited programs as of June 2017 is 314. This is an increase from June 2016 when there were 53 newly accredited programs and 274 Maryland Accredited programs in the State.
- The Maryland EXCELS tree at the 28th Annual Kennedy Krieger Festival of Trees at the Maryland State Fairgrounds was beautifully decorated this year with handmade, animal-themed ornaments, crafted by children in Maryland EXCELS participating programs. The Kennedy Krieger Festival of Trees is a three-day holiday event to benefit children and families who receive treatment and services at Kennedy Krieger Institute each year.
- The EXCELS branch participated in the annual B'More Healthy Expo in March 2018. This opportunity allowed Maryland EXCELS to be shared with over 700 families and children.
- The division launched the Maryland Excels Toolkit, a new resource for child care and early education programs. The Maryland EXCELS Toolkit supports programs as they work toward quality improvement, and is available to anyone interested in expanding their knowledge about quality child care and early education.

### KEEPING FAMILIES INVOLVED AND UP-TO-DATE: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- The 2nd Family Engagement summit was held in August 2017. Due to the overwhelming response with over 400 people registered, the Summit was livestreamed to accommodate everyone.
- Participants who attended the summit gained access to resources, tools and support services offered to early care and education providers, families, and communities based on Maryland's Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework. Participants were also able to learn specific strategies regarding family engagement, including the appropriate use of technology in modern times as well as exchange ideas and problem solve with colleagues and experts in the field.
- The keynote speaker, Lisa Guersney, discussed technology in early childhood education and engaging families. Attendees had the opportunity to hear about a wide variety of topics in breakout sessions, including:
  - How to develop and enhance resilience in children and families.
  - Promoting wellness within LGBT Families.
  - Information on Cultural Awareness and Family Engagement.
  - Tips for Bringing Early Learning and Family Engagement into the Digital Age.
- Several Summit participants received a Family Engagement Toolkit to take back to their programs in order to support their goals of improving family engagement practices.
- The division received \$560,000.00 in supplemental funding from Kellogg for the Family Engagement Grant, specifically for the Consortium project.
- The division launched the Family Engagement Toolkit in Action E-Newsletter, with over 4,500 recipients.

### MAKING SURE EACH STUDENT IS "READY-AT-FIVE"- KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT (KRA)

- The division completed administration of 2017 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. The report showed an increase in percentage of kindergartners demonstrating readiness from 43 percent to 45 percent as well as an increase in the number of jurisdictions assessing all kindergartners.
- The division hosted five Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Regional Leadership Forums to discuss the most recent KRA report. The Forums took place at Wor-Wic Community College in Wicomico County; Chesapeake College in Queen Anne's County; The Judy P. Hoyer Family Learning Center in Prince George's County; Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory campus in Howard County; and at the Board of Education in Washington County.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD	1
DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION- EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES	2
DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND OMBUDSMAN	5
DIVISION OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS	6
DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT/ ACADEMIC POLICY	7
OFFICE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	10
OFFICE OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION	12
OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	12
MARYLAND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	13
SCHOOL FACILITIES BRANCH	13
MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY	14
DIVISION OF CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS	15
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES	16
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES	18
DIVISION OF BUSINESS SERVICES	18
OFFICE OF AUDIT	19
OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY	20
JUVENILE SERVICES EDUCATION SYSTEM	21
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	21
OFFICE OF FISCAL PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION	22
OFFICE OF RESEARCH	22

- The Forums brought together over 100 key stakeholders from the early care and education systems such as child care providers, Judy Center, Special Education, early childhood advisory councils, Local Libraries, Head Start, and Community Based programs.

#### IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS - SUPPORTING PROVIDERS

- The licensing branch began Face-to-face Health and Safety training in March 2017 after state recognized trainers and adjunct college faculty were trained by the State.
- On-line training became available in May 2017 at no cost to providers and continues to be offered through the State Agency's learning management system (Blackboard).
  - Trained approximately 125 high school teachers implementing the 90-hour course, including All Children and the Americans with Disabilities Act, for CTE programs.
- The licensing branch processed fingerprinting reimbursement requests as required by the new Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) regulations for 367 providers (centers/homes) as of January 2018, for a total of \$110,778.45 in obligations. Of that, \$92,697.29 has been paid to date.
- The office of child care awarded 367 Training Vouchers to providers in the amount of \$110,520.00 for the Maryland State Child Care Association Conference.

#### DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION- EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

The Special Education/Early Intervention Services Division of MSDE provides leadership, support and accountability to local school systems, public agencies, and stakeholders in Maryland's comprehensive birth through age 21 system. The division focuses on services for students with a wide range of disabilities, making access to equal growth and education stronger and more accessible to students and their families. The goal is to close achievement gaps for all children, with a special emphasis on children with disabilities.

#### WORKING TOGETHER: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND STATE/ LOCAL COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

- The division regularly convened advisory and leadership partners in State policy and implementation deliberations and decision-making. Specifically:
  - The Education Advocacy Coalition (EAC) provided ongoing, meaningful engagement of a broad variety of education and disability rights organizations in high stakes discussions.
  - Maryland's State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) assisted and advised the division to continue effective and efficient implementation and improvement of Maryland's Statewide, interagency system of services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
  - The Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) reviewed the status of Maryland's special education system of services against Federal and State determination criteria to ensure compliance and made recommendations to strengthen K-12 policy and practices.
  - Through three springtime regional listening forums, local Directors of Special Education, Preschool Special Education Coordinators, and Infants and Toddlers Program Directors shared strategic insight into local successes and proposed actionable goals to address challenges in the State.
  - Seven State-Local Steering Committees (each comprised of State and local subject matter experts) provided guidance related to

industry standards and trends in speech and language, teaching visually-impaired students, adapted physical education, deaf and hard-of-hearing children and students, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and secondary transition.

#### PROVIDING GENERAL SUPERVISION AND UNIVERSAL PERFORMANCE SUPPORT – DISPROPORTIONALITY/SIGNIFICANT DISPROPORTIONALITY

- Convened the Disproportionality Stakeholder Workgroup, this workgroup aimed at promoting equity by targeting widespread disparities in the treatment of students of color with disabilities.
  - Finalized the State's implementation timeline and drafted proposed regulations to address disproportionality and significant disproportionality in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). The division also received State Board of Education approval of the proposed timeline and draft regulations and posted draft regulations for public comment.
- Held two public hearing forums to offer additional opportunities for individuals from across the state to offer public comment.
- Presented timeline and draft regulations to local school systems during the 2018 regional Access, Equity, and Progress Professional Learning Opportunities (PLO).

#### REGIONALIZATION: STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN THE BIRTH-21 SYSTEM

- As targeted in the division's Strategic Plan: Moving Maryland Forward, Sharpen the Focus for 2020, the division established regional listening forums with State and local executive leadership to study implementation efforts and enhance program effectiveness. The focused dialogue led to impactful insight on two of the three strategic action imperatives: early childhood and secondary transition. Using a Consultancy Model, State/ local teams developed ideas and suggestions to address identified needs at the local level. Up to 50 special education and early intervention leaders attended each forum.

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD - IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN SYSTEM OF SERVICES

- Held Kindergarten Readiness Assessment/Early Learning Assessment (KRA/ ELA) Leadership Meeting—culminating in a joint meeting with WestEd and the Ohio Department of Education to review status of implementation of both assessments and proposed next steps that will be pursued regarding future administrations.
- Held face-to-face meetings with Cecil, Frederick, Howard, and Montgomery County pilot jurisdictions to continue work with Johns Hopkins University/ Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE) web-based process tool, the Digital Portfolio.
- Held bi-monthly webinars with Cecil, Frederick, Howard, and Montgomery County pilot jurisdictions.
- Conducted three regional Professional Learning Opportunities (PLO) Lessons-Learned listening forums.
- Presentation of PLO contents and outcomes to the following State-Local Steering Committees: Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapy; Deaf and Hard of Hearing State Steering Committee; Teachers of Visually-Impaired Students; and Speech-Language.
- Held statewide training of trainers for designated local Infants and Toddlers Program staff on version 2.0 of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) web-based document.

#### SECONDARY TRANSITION: IMPLEMENTING A SECONDARY TRANSITION TO POST-SCHOOL SYSTEM OF SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Disseminated a Statewide, Cross-Agency flow of services to be piloted within several local school systems in Maryland as part of a funded Technical Assistance grant with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). Maryland was represented at the annual Capacity Building Institute through NTACT to showcase the efforts of the State grantees to promote

positive outcomes for youth with disabilities.

- Participated in the International Small Bites Expo, which spotlights the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) sponsored Culinary Training Program at Chesapeake College. Through a partnership with Chesapeake College, DORS and the Upper-shore local school systems (Queen Anne's, Talbot, Dorchester, Caroline, and Kent counties) the division engaged in a culinary training program that developed skills that align with local employment opportunities in the culinary field.
- Participated in the Lower Shore Transition and Advocacy Conference which provided information for students and their families through breakout sessions focusing on Benefits Counseling, the ABLE Act, Job Corps, Skills USA, Assistive Technology Opportunities, Eastern Shore Self Advocacy Project, Maryland Transition Digital Portfolios, and Job Centers of America.
- Partnered in planning for a new Center for Transition and Employment Innovation to be developed in partnership with University of Maryland, College of Education, Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education (CHESE), and other partners.
- Partnered with the Department of Disabilities and University of Maryland College Park on the creation of content for a Transition Tracker Tool to aid in tracking transition services, activities, and pre-employment transition services as well as serving as a tool to connect with state agency partners to share status information regarding parent/youth follow-up and eligibility.

#### ACCESS, EQUITY, PROGRESS: IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE INTEGRATED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

- Convened quarterly meetings of the Education Advocacy Coalition (EAC) to enable ongoing, meaningful engagement of a broad constituency of education and disability rights organizations in State-level deliberations.
- Held five Access, Equity, Progress professional learning opportunities (PLO) by region on Specially Designed Instruction and Disproportionality.
- Delivered opening remarks for the 2018 Deaf/Hard of Hearing Steering Committee Conference, followed by a roundtable discussion among members and the Assistant State Superintendent of the division.
- Developed progress scenarios to identify gaps in implementation of policies, procedures, and practices that drive significant disproportionality and action plans to amend the identified gaps.
- Provided onsite technical assistance to local school systems on Maryland's Eastern Shore regarding use of discretionary funding to implement models of best practice to improve outcomes for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Delivered the keynote address for the spring 2018 We C.A.R.E (Community Awareness and Resource Extravaganza) family resource event in Garrett County. We C.A.R.E, provides resources for families that have a child with a disability.
- Delivered Keynote for the spring 2018 Maryland Assistive Technology Network (MATN) messaging the importance of implementing assistive technology for students with disabilities for college, career and community readiness.

#### FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES, BIRTH-21

- Held the Family Support Services (FSS) Statewide conference in addition to regional professional learning opportunities and meetings.
- Presented a webinar to all Local Infants and Toddlers Programs to review State Family Involvement Survey results and share the data features of the dashboards reflecting these results. The survey, completed each fall, is offered to over 10,400 families of infants and toddlers with special needs.
- Opened the annual Parent Involvement Survey window (February through May) for more than 103,700 parents of children who receive special education services to provide feedback that guides efforts to improve special education and related services throughout the State.
- Logged more than 200 parent calls since January 1. Through the calls, the division's family support specialists: addressed parent concerns and inquiries; provided resources and information to help parents navigate

the special education process; collaborated with parents and local school systems; introduced parents to their Local Family Support Center; and assisted parents in understanding the Maryland Procedural Safeguards Notice and utilizing the State's formal and informal dispute resolution processes.

- Implemented regional family support strategic planning sessions with diverse groups of local stakeholders including Special Education Directors and Supervisors, local Infants and Toddlers Directors and staff, and local Family Support Services coordinators. Teams analyzed data from various sources and participants discussed tailor made questions reflective of their own jurisdiction/agency's data.

#### INTERAGENCY WAIVER, MEDICAID, AND NONPUBLIC SERVICES

- Received an additional 100 Autism Waiver slots, effective July 2018, approved by the Governor and the Maryland State Legislature. This allows Autism Waiver services to be provided to 1,200 Maryland children and their families annually.
- Autism Waiver will dis-enroll over 90 youth who will be aging out of Waiver services and entering the adult Developmental Disabilities system, allowing for 90 youth and their families to begin receiving Waiver services.
- Provided technical assistance, support, and consultation to other State and community agencies to assure a seamless transition for youth exiting and entering the Autism Waiver.
- Piloted an online Plan of Care program in seven jurisdictions and incorporated a service coordinator feedback section to better support the, soon to be, 1,200 children and families on the Autism Waiver.
- Provided extensive technical assistance and policy guidance on Autism Waiver and Medicaid billing to special education directors, Medicaid coordinators, Infants and Toddlers Program directors, Autism Waiver service coordinators and providers, and nonpublic schools staff and administrators.

#### INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

- Participated in the 2018 Developmental Disabilities Day in Annapolis.
- Participated, along with more than 3,000 students, in the Cool Schools Polar Bear Plunge for Maryland Special Olympics.
- Participated in the Maryland Coalition of Families 17th Annual "Family Day" in Annapolis.
- Recognized April as National Autism Awareness Month with internal and external partners. Staff participated in games, giveaways, and thoughtful reflection in recognition and support of children and adults with autism spectrum disorder.
- Supported Governor Hogan's Maryland Day to Serve community engagement project. Teams volunteered onsite restocking inventory at "The Book Thing of Baltimore", a community lending library in Baltimore City, which was heavily damaged by fire in 2016.

#### DIVISION OF CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability plays multiple roles at MSDE, working to strengthen student performance. It improves learning through data collection and analysis, and strengthening instructional programs and public data. The Office of Academic Standards handles all elementary, middle, and high school instructional programs outside of Career and Technology Education. The Office of Assessment maintains and strengthens the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of all Statewide student testing, as well as facilitation of externally sponsored measures such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Finally, the Office of Accountability has the responsibility for data collection and validation, development and management of data systems, and report publishing.

#### ENHANCING GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM



## MARYLAND SUMMER CENTERS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

- MSDE has sponsored the Summer Center Programs for more than 50 years. Among this past year's centers:
  - The Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Applied Physics Lab Center for Space Science, this year marked the 20th year for the Space Science Center at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory.
  - The Anne Arundel County Public Schools Center for Global Languages provided an opportunity for students to learn languages and aspects of Spanish, French, and Chinese cultures.
  - The Resource Asset Management Solutions (RAMS) Center for Chesapeake Bay Ecosystems Research held middle school and high school sessions in partnership with the NorthBay Education Foundation. The RAMS Center for Chesapeake Ecosystem Education engaged middle and high school students in the authentic investigation of environmental issues that affect the Chesapeake Bay and the eastern shore of Maryland.
  - The Outward Bound Center for Gifted and Talented EL Student Leaders was developed for 2017 through a cooperative effort between the Baltimore Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound School, the MSDE Gifted and Talented (GT) Office, and the MSDE English Learners (EL) Office. This Center provided English Learners who were identified as being gifted leaders the opportunity to explore, develop, and enhance their leadership skills.
  - Camp Summit East: The Center for Creativity and Exploration was a week-long overnight summer program designed specifically for gifted students ages 9 through 15. This program was created especially for developing the "inner and outer nature" of gifted youth. The Center was located on the NorthBay Adventure facility in Cecil County and featured zip-lining, kayaking, swimming, astronomy, ropes courses, and much more.

## RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

- Ten Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) schools were formally recognized by the Maryland State Board of Education at a ceremony held during the September meeting. School and Local Education Agency (LEA) representatives were greeted by State Superintendent, Dr. Karen Salmon; State Board President, Mr. Andy Smarick; and State Board Vice-President Dr. Chester Finn. A Certificate of Excellence was awarded to the principal or representative of each school.
  - The 2016 EGATE Schools are: Crofton Elementary; Piney Orchard Elementary; Severna Park Elementary (Anne Arundel County); Cecil Elementary; Mount Royal Elementary/Middle, Thomas Jefferson Elementary/Middle (Baltimore City); Dr. James Craik Elementary, William B. Wade Elementary (Charles County); Chevy Chase Elementary (Montgomery County); and Whitehall Elementary (Prince George's County).

## MARYLAND CENTERS FOR CREATIVE CLASSROOMS- SUPPORTING ART EDUCATION

- The Maryland Centers for Creative Classrooms initiative was an opportunity for Arts Educators to attend four days of professional development held by the Maryland Centers for Creative Classrooms.
  - Work highlighted three tracks: Arts Education, Arts Integration, and Arts Leadership. The program hosted a total of four sessions in various locations such as: Coppin State University in Baltimore; Queen Anne's County High School; and Barbara Ingram School for the Arts in Hagerstown.
  - Arts educators honed in on their personal artistry through advanced technique and studio classes, then focused on building bridges between their schools and communities by planning community arts projects for the upcoming school year. Participants interested in arts education leadership also analyzed their schools' commitment to arts education and spent the week creating plans to elevate programming in the upcoming school year.

## RECOGNIZING BILITERACY - THE MARYLAND SEAL OF BILITERACY

- Seven school districts participated in the first year of the Maryland Seal of Biliteracy program. Carroll, Cecil, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Washington Counties awarded 1,208 graduating seniors Seals of Biliteracy in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish. For 2017-18, additional participating school districts include Baltimore, Calvert, Frederick, Howard, and Worcester.
- MSDE staff collaborated with colleagues from Alaska and Indiana to present a session at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages annual convention in November 2017. The presentation included a reflection on the first-year successes and challenges in implementing a Seal of Biliteracy program, as well as interactive break-out sessions based on attendee's questions.
- Several public and private schools in Maryland are participating in a world-wide initiative, the Sister States School Linkage Program. With a grant from the Maryland Humanities Council, students are connecting virtually with students in Kenya, Japan, Estonia, and Nigeria to investigate common issues and design projects that integrate science, social studies, the arts, and world languages. The projects will be showcased in the spring in Annapolis. Maryland currently has Sister State relationships in eighteen countries.

## IMPROVING INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- The Instructional Technology/School Library Media team held the summer OER (Open Educational Resources) two-day workshop in July for Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties. Team building, copyright, accessibility, privacy, and evaluation related to OERs were the focus. At the end of each workshop the participants were honored and celebrated for their hard work and perseverance.

## STRENGTHENING SCHOOL LIBRARIES

- Held the first Maryland Information Literacy Summit "Teaching Information Literacy in a Post-Truth World" at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum, MD in July 2017. The Summit brought together the school, public, academic, and special library community for a day of idea sharing and statewide information literacy framework development.
- Keynote presenter Andy Mink, from the National Humanities Center, provided a look at the information literacy competencies important for information seekers and learners in all stages of life. Group leaders then provided an overview of the Maryland Information Literacy Skills documents and met in affinity groups on topics including early childhood literacies and the importance of media mentorship; "literacy bits" for young adults seeking health and other types of information; and instructional strategies emphasizing digital technologies for K-8 students.
- The School Library Media/Instructional Technology briefing was held in November 2017. Approximately 50 statewide School Library Supervisors, Instructional Technology liaisons, non-public and Higher Education representatives were in attendance.

## BUILDING STRONGER EDUCATORS

- The Maryland Peer Coaching Collaboratives were held in several sessions throughout the Summer of 2017; 27 schools participated across 16 districts, an increase of over 50 percent from the previous year.
  - The goal of this initiative is to increase student achievement by creating a data-based collaborative culture among teachers. Through participation, school teams developed a vision and an action plan to incorporate peer coaching as part of school culture. Throughout the school year, teams will work collaboratively with MSDE to analyze data to support teacher and student growth.
  - MSDE will provide two days of training, onsite support, financial assistance, and resources to each team. As a part of this training:
    - Schools are required to collect and analyze data, accumulate artifacts, and share best practices with MSDE and other schools across the state, using a template designed by MSDE.
    - Data-dialogue and peer visit protocols grounded in qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and response are used.

- Held the Prekindergarten-Grade 2 Educator Symposium, in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood, Special Education, and Instructional Content Offices, a free event that focused on essential practices to support principals and teachers of early learners with research, skills, and strategies to increase student achievement.
  - Objectives of the event were to: Explore brain research focused on children from age 4-8 to understand developmentally appropriate instruction; recognize how developmentally appropriate instruction in PreK-2 impacts future learning; and identify developmentally appropriate instructional techniques and strategies that can be implemented in the PreK-2 classroom to support brain development.
- The Second Annual Maryland Teacher Leadership Summit was held in Summer 2017, a two-day summit designed to promote and develop teacher-led initiatives across the state. Modeled after the successful National Teach to Lead Summit, the Maryland event spotlights and supports a selective group of teacher-led initiatives across Maryland and provides teacher-led teams hands-on training to refine their program models, identify supports, and communicate their initiatives to key stakeholders.
- Ninety local school system representatives across the content areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and Social Studies signed on to become authorized users of the online District Curricular Support Materials (CSM) for exchanging information about district curricular support materials. MSDE will add authorized LEA users for Phase I implementation to support district-to-district sharing of lists of curricular materials.
  - Phase I
    - All local systems can submit English Language Arts, Mathematics and US Government curricular support materials citations so that the statewide list by county can be shared across Maryland. Districts will provide lists of their supplemental materials in the form of a standardized excel file.
    - A partnership with EdReports allows access to a searchable excel file with all ELA and Mathematics material ratings and reports prepared to date.
    - A Title 1 Curriculum Project will entail a CSM rollout with Baltimore City and Prince George's district offices.
  - Phase II
    - Districts will form teams to review materials in accordance with forthcoming MSDE guidance which will be informed by the results of Phase I.

## IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Developed and disseminated a Comprehensive Needs Assessment to a variety of stakeholders statewide on current literacy practices. This needs assessment was designed to drive the development of a comprehensive literacy plan.
- Collaborated with the Early Learning Branch and University of Maryland researchers to develop a Maryland Comprehensive Literacy Plan, based on evidence based literacy practices for children birth through grade 12.
- Supported Prince George's County Public Schools with two days of Professional Development on providing effective student feedback.
- Collaborated with mathematics specialists to plan regional Bridge Projects training sessions for project monitors; continued editing and revising Bridge Projects based on feedback.
- Planned a series of eight statewide professional development webinars in collaboration with the Center for the Collaborative Classroom to follow up summer PK-2 Symposia on research based Essential Instructional Practices in the early childhood classroom.

## IMPROVING SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

- The MSDE Social Studies Office, in conjunction with Howard, Carroll, Frederick, Anne Arundel and Baltimore City, facilitated the development of a Learning Plan to support the new assessment limits for American Government.

## IMPROVING MATHEMATICS

- Checked and edited mathematics curricular documents to ensure that they are accessible.
- Finalized Maryland Assessment Program Field Test item selection.
- Worked on the development of the Mathematics web page.

## DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

- MSDE's Maryland Assessment Program – formerly known as PARCC, received peer review feedback, meeting all 29 critical elements required by the US Department of Education. It is the only state assessment aligned to the Common Core State Standards to achieve this designation.
- Published and trained stakeholders on the new Maryland Accommodations Manual, a joint effort between the Assessment branch and MSDE's Special Education division.
- Conducted five regional Data Workshops focusing on PARCC data and reporting of student performance as well as school and district outcomes.
- Coordinated several local school system data demonstrations focusing on PARCC data in the following counties: Prince George's ; Anne Arundel; Worcester; Wicomico; Queen Anne's; Allegany; Calvert; Frederick; Carroll; Cecil; Kent; Charles; Baltimore City; and Dorchester.

## PROVIDING ASSISTANCE WHERE IT'S NEED MOST

- The division is a part of an ongoing collaboration with the Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement Branch in providing guidance in the implementation of Priority/School Incentive Grant Plan and meet as the Baltimore City Public School System Core Prep Team.
- Collaborated and facilitated Regional Meetings in all six identified regions.
  - As part of the new regional technical assistance and training initiative, by January 2018 there were three meetings of the western Maryland counties--Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties.
  - Topics addressed included: the opioid crisis and state resources for education; local district responses to the opioid crisis; completing Title I reports and applications; and preparing for monitoring of local education agencies' implementation under the new Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA).
  - Region 1 districts also participated in the March 2018 MSDE Title I Coordinator's meeting to receive training on Maryland's approved State plan under ESSA, and other new ESSA requirements.

## OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND OMBUDSMAN

The Office of Communications, Partnerships, and Ombudsman oversees and implements Statewide multimedia communications with an emphasis on cultivating stakeholder and media relations. The office coordinates corporate and nonprofit partnerships, as well as recognition and awards programs. The Ombudsman office seeks to provide answers and assistance to the public regarding particular educational issues. As a communications-based office, this division helps to provide the public face of MSDE and is responsible for creating stronger partnership with the Maryland Public Schools Community.

## REACHING OUT TO THE PUBLIC

- Issued 75 press releases spotlighting the work of MSDE and Maryland public schools, resulting in hundreds of media placements.
- Handled 1,215 press contacts, working with regional and national reporters and highlighting the strengths of Maryland students, educators, and schools.
- Maintained and upgraded the MarylandPublicSchools.org website, building scores of new and accessible pages.
- Completed 119 Maryland Public Information Act requests, providing documents to the press, and public.

- Completed and aired 25 videos geared toward the general public. Videos were viewed 11,168 times via MSDE's YouTube Channel; plus 21,665 times over other MSDE-branded social media and developed another eight videos solely for instructional purposes.
- Added 3,333 new combined followers to MSDE's social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) for a total of 17,197.

#### CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

Accrued annual underwriting from eighteen major corporations and other organizations to fully fund the following programs:

- Maryland Teacher of the Year Program, including its 1,100 person Gala along with gifts and prizes, various monthly educational events, lunch meetings, retreats, and celebrations.
- Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools Program, the official announcement, lunch and an Honors Dinner took place.
- MSDE's partnership with the Milken Foundation was renewed and a Maryland award recipient was successfully submitted , selected, and presented with a \$25,000.00 award.
- Maryland Teachers of Promise Program and Institute, a one-day institute for aspiring teachers, took place in April 2018. The program had 250 attendees with a total cost \$12,000.00 which was obtained fully through underwriting.

#### GIVING BACK TO OUR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS- MAJOR GIFTS

- Smart Technologies supplied 24 Interactive White Boards (\$7,000.00 value per board) which were given to each of the 24 Local Maryland Teachers of the Year.
- Six Interactive White Boards (\$7,000.00 value each) were given to each of the six new Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools.
- The Maryland Auto Dealers Association donated a \$28,000.00 car, given as a gift to the 2017-2018 Maryland Teacher of the Year, Joshua Carroll.
- Northrop Grumman provided the funding to support the Smith Island & Chesapeake Bay Retreat, a three-day program of experiential environmental education for all 24 Local Maryland Teachers of the Year, held on Smith Island.

#### RECOGNIZING THE HARD WORK OF OUR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

##### TEACHER OF THE YEAR

- MSDE implemented another successful Gala in October 2017, which was produced by Maryland Public Television and was held with 1,100 attendees.
- The 2017-2018 Maryland Teacher of the Year, Joshua Carroll, has been engaged as a speaker in education programs throughout Maryland including conferences, seminars, new teacher recruiting events and graduation commencements.
- Guidance has been given throughout the year to local school districts regarding the application process and the selection of outstanding Teachers of the Year, leading to the selection of the 2018-2019 Local Maryland Teachers of the Year.
- The 24 selected local teachers received State Board Honors and a Teacher of the Year celebration lunch took place in May 2018 involving all school districts.

#### MILKEN NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARDS PROGRAM

- Maryland's Milken National Educator, Allison Felton, was selected by the Milken Foundation and a surprise announcement was made by Governor Hogan, Dr. Karen Salmon, and Mike Milken in January 2018 at Annapolis High School in Anne Arundel County. Ms. Felton was also honored by the State Board of Education during one of their monthly meetings.

#### BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS PROGRAM

- Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools were selected and nominated to the US Department of Education;
  - All six nominees were accepted by the US Department of Education

and an Honors Dinner for the Blue Ribbon schools was held in Annapolis. Commendations for each of the six schools also took place at the Maryland House and Maryland Senate.

- Blue Ribbon Tours of Excellence are currently being planned and implemented; these are school visits that include student and staff assemblies with commendations by the State Superintendent and elected officials.

#### TEACHERS OF PROMISE INSTITUTE

- The Teachers of Promise Institute 2018, a one-day program bringing together veteran teacher mentors and protégé teachers to be, was planned and implemented with the purpose of motivating, inspiring, and drawing information and advice from outstanding educators in Maryland.
- More than 90 Teachers of the Year as well as Milken award recipients volunteered as college student mentors to 150 college-seniors in education programs at 20 Maryland colleges and universities.

### DIVISION OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

The Division of Education Effectiveness focuses on improving customer service and maintaining proper certifications and approvals for our educators and school systems. The division provides support, guidance, and certifications to five regions across the State, with customer service aligned to providing technical assistance and support. The regional model allows for targeted onsite monitoring activities in our effort to strengthen certification practices and procedures.

#### CREATING EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS

- Revamped and greatly enhanced MSDE's capacity regarding response time and requests involving certification concerns from educators. Response time for certification requests was reduced from over two years to six-weeks.
- Hosted a Human Resource Directors Meeting to address human capital issues.
- Met with members of the certification community from across the State for quarterly meetings.
- Attended the 2017 Urban Schools Human Capital Academy (USHCA) Convening, where eight states came together to discuss:
  - What are the metrics states can collect, analyze, and improve in the following four “pillar” areas: collecting and using metrics; expanding a quality teacher pipeline; influencing teacher preparation providers; and expanding district Human Capital capacity?
  - What does the research say about best practices to expand the teacher pipeline, influence teacher preparation providers, and utilize alternative providers effectively?
  - What is the State's role in influencing and differentiating supports to districts in the four “pillar” areas?
  - How do we make the best use of this alliance through learning, sharing practices, and problem-solving?

- Hosted a meeting of all local school system Continuing Professional Development (CPS) coordinators.
- Attended the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) Conference in Baltimore City. The Nonpublic School Approval Branch facilitated certification one-to-one meetings with individuals employed in the nonpublic school community. Approximately 25 individuals were supported during this conference.
- The Program Approval and Certification Branches joined to host a combined Deans and Directors/Human Recourse Directors' meeting. There were 16 colleges and universities in attendance including John's Hopkins, Hood, USM, Salisbury, Mount St. Mary's, Goucher, Washington Adventist, Towson, Notre Dame, UMD, UMES, St. Mary's, Frostburg, MICA, Loyola, UMBC, and Bowie. There were also representatives from seven local systems including Baltimore County, Washington County, Dorchester County, Howard County, Carroll County, Frederick County, and St Mary's County.
  - Topics included the recruitment of teachers, finger-printing and background checks, and collaboration between colleges, universities and local school districts.

#### WESTERN REGION

- Allegany County** – Completed State program approval visit with Frostburg University, and assisted Allegany County Public Schools Certification Office in the processing of new hires.
- Fredrick County** – Worked with Hood College to advise on program questions and new program submissions. As well as conducted a limited, unannounced onsite monitoring visit at a nonpublic school to investigate a complaint and ensure the safety and educational wellbeing of the students enrolled in the school.
- Carroll County** – The Nonpublic School Approval Branch helped open Springdale Preparatory School in New Windsor, MD, a private school. The division provided one-to-one certification support to another school in jeopardy of being recommended for intensive monitoring as a result of a significant number of non-certified or improperly certified teachers. The division also worked with Carroll County Public Schools to assist in the processing of new hires.
- Garrett County** - Completed training/mentoring for a local school system Certification Authorized Partner (CAP) associate who will be able to complete Advanced Professional Certificate renewals, adding endorsements by test, and generating reading evaluations for Garrett County employees.
- Washington County** - Awarded a \$137,473.00 grant for the Teacher Induction, Retention, Advancement Act Pilot Program.

#### WEST CENTRAL REGION

- Howard County** – Completed training/mentoring for a local school system certification specialist who will be able to complete APC renewals, adding endorsements by test, and complete reading evaluations for employees. The division also provided profiler training to one staff member, this training allows additional members of the Human Resources Office to view educator certification information.
- Montgomery County** – Awarded a \$724,031.00 grant for the Teacher Induction, Retention, Advancement Act Pilot Program to Montgomery County Public Schools. The division also helped open The Goddard School in Silver Spring, MD, a nonpublic school. Furthermore, the division participated in professional development for the Teacher Induction, Retention, Advancement Act Pilot Program grant participants in Montgomery County.

#### CENTRAL REGION

- Anne Arundel County** – Helped open Primrose School of Gambrills, MD, a nonpublic school. The division also conducted a two-day onsite monitoring visit at Harbour School, Annapolis, MD and Kennedy Krieger at Southern High School to determine ongoing compliance with the regulations.
- Baltimore City** – Helped open the Maryland Progressive Institute, a Type I nonpublic special education school in addition to meeting with Baltimore City's new Human Resources Director to discuss ways that MSDE can assist the certification team in Baltimore City. The division completed a State program approval visit with Loyola University and completed training/Mentoring for a local school system certification authorizer who will be able to complete APC renewals, adding endorsements by test, and complete reading evaluations for Baltimore City employees. The division is currently training/mentoring another certification authorized partner who will be able to provide all certification services to all Baltimore City employees.
- Baltimore County** – Provided one-to-one certification support to five nonpublic schools currently on Intensive Monitoring due to a significant number of non-certified or improperly certified teachers. In addition, the division helped open Mesivta Keeser Torah of Baltimore, a nonpublic school. The division met with Towson University Deans and Directors to discuss their education program and the possible addition of a computer science program that leads to teacher certification. Furthermore, the division conducted a limited, unannounced onsite monitoring visit at a nonpublic school as a six month follow up to the school being removed from intensive monitoring.
- Harford County** – Completed training/mentoring for the local school

system CAP associate who will be able to provide all certification services to Harford County employees.

#### SOUTHERN REGION

- Calvert County** – Completed training/mentoring for local school system CAP associate who will be able to provide all certification services to Calvert County employees.
- Prince George's County** – Completed training/mentoring for two local school system CAP associates who will be able to provide all certification services to Prince George's County employees. Staff also conducted onsite monitoring visits to two nonpublic schools to determine ongoing compliance with the regulations.
- St. Mary's County** – Met with St. Mary's County representatives to begin work on an alternative preparation program that will benefit a local school system that needs more teachers. The division also completed training/mentoring for a local school system CAP associate who will be able to provide all certification services to St. Mary's County employees.

#### EASTERN SHORE REGION

- Dorchester County** – Conducted a regularly scheduled onsite monitoring visit at a nonpublic school to determine ongoing compliance with the regulations.
- Somerset County** – Provided training to new Human Resources employees could have access to the Educator Information System database for purposes of uploading documents and entering data. Furthermore, the division also provided profiler training to one staff member in Somerset County, this training allows additional members of the Human Resources Office to view educator certification information.
- Wicomico County** – Met with the Deans of Salisbury University to discuss their teacher education program. Staff members also visited the UMES to discuss current program revisions.
- Queen Anne's County** – Helped open Sweet Bay Magnolia Academy, a new nonpublic school, in addition to providing training via Web Ex, to the Human Resources Director of the Queen Anne's school system so that they are able to have Read Only access to the Educator Information System database.

### DIVISION OF STUDENT, FAMILY AND SCHOOL SUPPORT/ ACADEMIC POLICY

The Division of Student, Family, and School Support/Academic Policy administers and supervises State and Federal education programs for economically and socially disadvantaged children as well as programs and services that facilitate the emotional, mental, and physical well-being of all students. It also oversees programs that strengthen the engagement in student activities that develop character and civic responsibility, and assists local systems in promoting positive student behavior and developing safe, orderly environments conducive for learning.

#### MAKING SURE EVERY MARYLAND STUDENT SUCCEEDS

- The U.S. Department of Education approved Maryland's Consolidated State Plan of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for Maryland in January 2018.
- The ESSA Plan sets into place interim targets and long-term goals for schools and systems and outlines a collaborative strategy for low-performing schools. Maryland developed its ESSA Plan after unprecedented outreach to citizens across the State.
- Maryland's Plan was submitted to the US Department of Education after State Board approval. The submission was the culmination of 18 months of research, compiling input from scores of educators, parents, and others. MSDE held five regional listening sessions, solicited ideas through surveys, and met regularly in external groups since the process began in February 2016 in order to gain valuable input.
- The new comprehensive ESSA Plan is designed to help steer Maryland's public education system to a new level of student and school success.

- A commitment to equity is embedded throughout the plan. It aligns accountability measures to school improvement efforts in order to provide equitable opportunities for all students. By simplifying the current accountability system and its related school and local school system improvement programs, both educators and parents will gain a better understanding of how schools are doing.
- The plan places a special focus on strengthening low-performing schools, using innovative strategies based on collaboration between local systems and the State.
- Maryland's ESSA plan is designed to make sure that well-prepared teachers are available for all students. Strategies seeking to improve the skills of educators, expand certification options, provide additional support to educators, and set in place strategies to ensure equitable access to effective educators were included in the plan.
- The plan places a special focus on early childhood education, with a commitment to accountability and support for Pre-kindergarten learning.
- The State will use federal funding to increase the capacity of local systems and schools to provide students with access to a well-rounded curriculum. The plan supports local systems in providing programs that improve access and opportunity, strengthen access to STEM core concepts and programs, provide more college preparatory support, and boost fine arts options.

#### ALWAYS MOVING TOWARD IMPROVEMENT- PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- **Title 1, Part A** – Title I served 424 schools across the State in 2017-2018. The purpose of Title I under ESSA is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, high quality education, and to close education achievement gaps.
- **McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program** – Sixteen out of 24 local school systems received McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Youth grants, a state agency-collaboration and funding stream that addresses the whole needs of homeless students.
- **School Improvement** – Collaborated with the Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement in designing and presenting at the Baltimore City Schools Priority Leadership Retreat. The division also designed scoring rubrics for Priority, SIG IV, and Focus grant applications, as well as completed the initial review with feedback for Priority and SIG IV applications for Prince George's, Baltimore City, and Baltimore County systems.
- **Foster Care** – MSDE is working with the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHR), local departments of social services, and local school systems (LSSs) to ensure foster children continue to receive their educational services in the best setting. The development of agreements between agencies will permit the student(s) to remain in the school of origin or geographical school if it is in their best interest. Future planning will also provide safeguards for foster care children.

#### SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS -STUDENT SERVICES AND STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAMS

- **State Board of Education Mental Health Committee** – Final recommendations and proposed actions of the committee regarding suicide and human trafficking prevention were presented to the State Board in October 2017 by the Student Services and Strategic Planning team.
  - Recommendations of the committee are designed to keep students safe and provide and/or increase awareness, guidance, evaluation, coordination/collaboration, and policy and regulations around suicide and human trafficking prevention initiatives.
  - Assisted with a Public Service Announcement, which ran throughout the month of May on the MSDE website and was distributed Statewide.
  - Hosted a Suicide Prevention and Child Abuse Conference for local student services professionals. Guest speakers included Linda Diaz,

CEO, Laurynslaw.org, Lynn Davis, Director, Child Advocacy Center, D'Lisa Worthy, Director, Maryland LAUNCH Strengthening Families Program, and Darla Sinclair, Psychotherapy Services, LLC.

- Information and activities were designed to educate student services professionals to recognize symptoms of students with mental health issues and abuse/neglect to prevent suicide and trauma.
- **Directors of Student Services Fall Administrative Meeting** – Focus: Disproportionality Root Causes and Childhood Trauma - Hosted the Directors of Student Services Fall Administrative Meeting. The meeting was designed to provide tools and resources to Directors of Student Services to assist LEAs in identifying and educating students that may have been adversely affected by traumatic experiences.
- **School Safety and Climate Team** – Co-presented with University of Maryland Center for School Mental Health and the Mental Health Association of Maryland on the State's mental health priorities. This helped to increase awareness of how MSDE is proactively addressing suicide prevention in the State.
- **Maryland College Application Campaign** – Increased involvement of schools and provided targeted outreach to unaccompanied and foster care youths, students with disabilities, and students in the juvenile education system. The goal of this program is to increase the number of first generation students, low-income students, unaccompanied youth, foster care youth, students with disabilities, and others underrepresented in higher education.
  - Collaborated with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) on college enrollment and financial aid data to identify school systems with challenging Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion and submission rates and provide technical assistance.
- **Legislation** – The division responded to the requirements of new legislation in a variety of ways. For example:
  - Convened four meetings of the Taskforce on Seclusion and Restraint between July and August 2017 to develop recommendations around the use of restraint and seclusion pursuant to Chapter 611 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland (Senate Bill 786).
  - The State will be able to assist LEAs in ensuring that restraint and seclusion are being implemented as a strategy where the safety of others may be compromised and not as a form of student discipline.
  - Convened three meetings of the Heroin and Opioid Workgroup to review programs that provide behavioral and substance abuse disorder services in public schools in the State and develop proposals to expand these programs to other jurisdictions as appropriate pursuant to Chapter 573 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland (House Bill 1082).
  - The division convened two full-day meetings of a stakeholder workgroup to update the emergency planning guidelines for LEAs and schools to accommodate, safeguard, and evacuate students, staff, and visitors with disabilities on public school grounds pursuant to Chapter 327 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland (House Bill 1061).
  - Developed a form for the Reporting of Naloxone Administration pursuant to Chapter 573 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland (House Bill 1082). This form will enable the State to determine when and where naloxone is being administered. This data will help align MSDE efforts to provide targeted technical assistance to LEAs on drug awareness and prevention and provide feedback to the Opioid Operational Command Center to provide additional leadership and assistance.
- **Governor's Opioid Operational Command Center (O OCC)** - Collaborated with State and local partners to increase awareness of the opioid epidemic through an enhanced Web page, resources, and videos.
  - Presented on Maryland's efforts to address the opioid epidemic at the National Advancing Mental Health Conference in Washington, DC.
  - Presented to Allegany Title I staff on the opioid epidemic in rural communities. These actions help to raise awareness and establish MSDE as an involved partner in the opioid crisis.

expanding or new charter schools could be 1,500 to 2,000 over the next three years, as schools open and grow.

#### CRAFTING REAL WORLD EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS - YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- The division oversees a variety of youth development programs, including the United States Senate Youth Program, for which two participants are selected annually.
- The division recently instituted a new grant program, Maryland Public Schools Opportunities Grant Program. Completing the application and distribution of the \$2,500,000.
- **Service Learning** – Refined service-learning implementation plans based on feedback received from a stakeholder review.
  - Verified and compiled service-learning data from each local school system for the 2016-2017 school year to create a statewide composite of service-learning activity.
  - Secured a commitment from Youth Service America to continue to offer free online service-learning training to Maryland educators. The development of effective service-learning experiences helps students apply what they learned in the classroom to real world issues. When local systems can explore how other school systems incorporate service-learning into various courses and grade levels, they are better able to identify potential projects that align well with Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards in their own system.
- **Maryland Association of Student Councils** – The Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC), hosted MASC Advance- a three-day leadership retreat for students from across the State of Maryland. More than 90 students were in attendance and were able to set goals for the year, attend workshops on facilitation, feedback, and troubleshooting, and were able to participate in team building activities and prepare for the Fall Leadership Conference.
  - The Fall Leadership Conference drew 573 student participants. Students participated in workshops, Diversity Talks, attended a college and career readiness panel, and participated in an idea exchange, and team building activities.
  - MASC hosted the first ever Southern Divisional Leadership Counties Conference for students in Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's and Prince George's Counties. More than 60 students participated in workshops, a "Leadership in Action" panel, as well as a service project and idea sharing activity.
- **Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup>CCLC)** – The 21st CCLC Summer Out-of-School Time program provided rigorous academics and engaging enrichment opportunities for economically disadvantaged students. These programs allow children to continue their learning throughout the summer while providing a safe place for them.
  - Three regional networking meetings were conducted with 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant managers for Central, Western, and Eastern Maryland. The following topics were discussed: a New Tool to Foster Safe Schools; How are Maryland Schools Addressing the Heroin/Opioid Epidemic? Cultural and Safety Awareness when Engaging Families; Beyond the School Hours Conference; and Collaboration Corner discussions.

#### ACADEMIC POLICY - PROVIDING EQUALITY AND EQUITY

##### ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS

- Collaborated with multiple States at a national meeting with U.S. Department of Education on how to leverage Title II funds with equity goals in ESSA.
- Updated and revised Maryland's Equity Plan for ensuring equitable access to excellent educators.
- Collaborated with multiple states on the Peer-to-Peer Educator Equity Labs.
- Collected data for the 2016-2017 school year to analyze trends in equitable access to effective educators and began development of a data collection system in collaboration with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability, the Division of Educator Effectiveness, and the Office of Teaching and Learning.

- **Student Services and School Counseling Team** – Completed Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Workgroup and created report for the General Assembly. The division also distributed School-Based Health Center (SBHC) grants to all MSDE SBHCs. A new standardized quarterly invoice process and form were initiated.
- **School Health Services** – Conducted the 17th Annual School Health Interdisciplinary Program (SHIP) Conference in August 2017. This program provides comprehensive training on coordinated school health. SHIP is committed to advancing quality and sustainability in school health.
  - Training was focused on helping school-based professionals understand the core concepts in the school health field, including best practice strategies and policy across a three-tiered framework of healthcare.
  - The SHIP Conference is sponsored by: The Center for School Mental Health – University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry; the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; MSDE; the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services; and the Maryland State School Health Council.
  - MSDE will once again be a co-sponsor to the 2018 event, which will be held July 31-August 2, 2018.
- **School Counselor Supervisor Spring Meeting** – Held a professional development session for each local school system supervisor of school counseling. The session provided relevant updates, best practices, and an opportunity for professional collaboration on any issue of interest or concerns. School counseling supervisors will use the information gained to serve their students, families, and local school systems accordingly.
- **2018 Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference** – The conference, sponsored by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, and offers innovative best practices and tools for victim service professionals to serve victims of crime in Maryland. School systems and other individuals across the State are invited to attend and all information is shared with each system.
- **Statewide Handle With Care Meeting** – Sponsored by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, this meeting supported the implementation of the Handle With Care program, a program that helps provide initial support to students who witness trauma in their neighborhoods. The programs also involves coordinated efforts between local school systems, their local police departments, and other community partners.
- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)** – The division sponsored ongoing training in PBIS, enabling school-based professionals to take proactive measures to ensure improved school climate. This initiative takes place through continued partnership with Johns Hopkins University and Sheppard Pratt Health Systems.
  - The division trained new schools in Tier 1 PBIS during summer 2017 bringing the total number of schools trained in Maryland to 1,100 across all 24 LEAs.
- **The SEED School** – The SEED School of Maryland entered its 10th year of operation with the 2017-2018 school year. Four hundred Maryland students are provided the support of a 24-hour learning environment through boarding on campus five days a week. The program includes academics, life skills, and an intensive support program to ensure post graduate success in college and career.
- **Charter Schools** – More than 22,000 students will attend charter schools in Maryland in 2018-2019. In five Maryland school systems, charter schools work with the school system increasing the choices available to families.
  - The partnership between Baltimore City Schools and Afya Baltimore, Inc, a charter school operator of two successful charter schools, enters its second year. Afya Baltimore, Inc., took over operations of a priority school in Baltimore City, Brehms Lane Elementary School. The school community, the LEA and the operator collaborated on the conversion and the improvement plan.
  - The first invitation to submit a proposal for a grant to start, expand or replicate a charter schools was released in June 2018. An estimated five grants will be awarded, the number of new seats in

## TITLE IV, PART A- STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT GRANTS

Title IV, Part A funding is designed to provide all students with access to a well-rounded education; improve school conditions for student learning; and improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

- Maryland received \$5.8 million to be provided to local systems through this grant, and all 24 systems received funding.

## GRANTS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL AIDS

### GRANTS OFFICE

- Continued to support LEA and non-profit organizations in providing enhancement of opportunities and services to students and teachers.
- Facilitated a roundtable discussion of MSDE's grant opportunities, which allowed for awareness by LEAs and other interested parties of opportunities to serve students/teachers.
- Attended Governor's Grants Conference in November 2017. Networked with other State agencies on opportunities to collaborate and were apprised of updates to Grants.gov and other resources to research grant opportunities.
- Collaborated with other MSDE staff on State Board Presentation about the Grants Process. This provided an understanding to the State Board on how MSDE facilitates State and Federal grants.

## PROVIDING SUPPORT TO STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- **Migrant Education Program (MEP)** – Administrative meetings were held in September and November 2017 for the Maryland Migrant Education Program. These focused on Professional Development for staff of the MEP, revisions to the Service Delivery Plan, revisions to the Program Application, and revisions to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment to align with the ESSA Maryland State Plan.
- **Neglected & Delinquent Youth** – Conducted annual program monitoring of all local system Neglected and Delinquent programs and state agency programs. Annual monitoring allows MSDE to ensure state and federal requirements are being met at the local and state correctional facilities and institutions for youth incarcerated and/or at risk, to receive an appropriate educational program that will lead to a high school diploma, employment, GED, training, and college/career readiness.
- **Parent & Family Engagement** – A Family Involvement Coordinators Meeting was held and included training on Evidence Based Strategies. The goal of this program is to benefit students and their families on how districts work with schools to ensure that family engagement initiatives are meeting needs of families and supporting student success and achievement.
- **Research & Evaluation** – Submitted Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR Part I & II) for Title I and the division. This data provides program managers and staff with important information about demographics and outcomes of those children receiving services for Title I, Migrant, Homeless Education, and Neglected and Delinquent programs.
  - Enrollment and Free and Reduced-Meal (FARMs) data was shared via individual school systems in order to provide local Title I Coordinators with data to help with planning for the 18-19 Title I Application and school rankings for eligibility for Title I schools.
- **Equitable Services** - Participated in National Private School Leadership Conference, these equitable services benefit eligible private school children, teachers and other educational personnel, and families under Title I, A and C; Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A and Title IV, Part A. (ESEA sections 1117(a)(3)(B) and 8501(a)(3)(B).)
  - Created Equitable Services Thought Partners to gain input from LEAs and private school officials on technical assistance and training needs. An MSDE Webpage for Equitable Services was created.

## EQUITY PLAN

- The division created an Equity Plan to ensure equal access to education

for all students. Two key strategies to highlight are:

- Improve Conditions for Learning: Focus on School Culture, Climate, and Social-Emotional Development.
  - The division is already using this strategy by engaging youth in leadership training, structured goal setting, and problem solving through the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC), and aims to eliminate barriers that prohibit segments of the student population from participating in MASC through positive changes such as creating fundraisers to help waive attendance fees for events.
- Empower Student Options: Ensure Families Have Access to High-quality. Educational Options That Align to Community Needs.
  - The division convened the Homeless Education State Advisory Council (HESAC) to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and ensure their educational needs are met.

## OFFICE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement provides leadership, support, and technical assistance to local school systems in order improve low-performing schools and foster the growth of effective leaders.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between MSDE and Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) was signed, identifying customized support that will be provided throughout the year to improve Baltimore City's lowest performing schools.
  - In August 2017, the office convened leadership from 16 low-performing Baltimore City schools for a three-day retreat. School leadership teams consisted of the principal, assistant principal, and a teacher leader from each school. The purpose of the convening was to analyze school data, prioritize school improvement needs, identify evidence-based strategies to address school improvement needs, and develop intervention plans.
  - Worked in collaboration with Title I and BCPS to convene 25 central office staff members from Baltimore City to review intervention plans, discuss school improvement needs, and schedule support visits to the lowest performing schools.
  - The office is continuing to implement deliverables identified in the MOU with BCPS. This includes providing leadership coaching, conducting instructional audits with principal supervisors, supporting analysis of school-level data to inform instructional decisions, and supporting implementation of Title I intervention plans.
- Published final report on Innovative School Schedules: Recommendations to Enhance Student Achievement.
- Established partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) at West-Ed to support school improvement work in alignment with Maryland's ESSA plan. MACC is providing the following support:
  - MACC in collaboration with the office will lead a cross-functional MSDE team to create a comprehensive plan that identifies the roles and responsibilities of each division as it connects to school improvement. The purpose of the plan is to set priorities, garner commitment, and align resources to support progress towards achieving school improvement priorities identified in Maryland's ESSA plan.
  - MACC will collaborate with MSDE to develop resources and professional learning experiences that will support school system leaders in identifying and implementing evidenced-based strategies. The existing cross-titles meeting will be used to ensure that Titles I, II, III, and IV are utilizing common resources and approaches to support school systems in the implementation of evidence-based strategies.
- Established partnership with the Regional Educational Laboratories (REL) Mid-Atlantic School and Support Alliance. REL will develop online workshops for school leadership teams identified for comprehensive support and improvement focused on turnaround leadership. The online resources will

become a part of the school improvement resource hub being created by the office.

- Facilitated an Improvement Science Workshop with the University of Maryland College Park's Center for Educational Innovation and Improvement. The purpose of the workshop was to engage in learning experiences to develop an understanding of improvement science and how it could be used to inform school improvement work.
- Participated on the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) School and District Improvement (SDI) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS). Information obtained from this meeting is used to inform implementation of school improvement priorities identified in Maryland's ESSA plan.
- Led a cross-functional MSDE team to develop an implementation strategy and action plan for the implementation of school improvement initiatives identified in the Maryland Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated Plan.
  - The purpose of the cross-functional team is to align school improvement efforts across MSDE to better support local school systems. The cross-function team consisted of: Representatives from Office of Research and Strategic Data Use; Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability; Division of Early Childhood Development; Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services; and the Division of Student, Family, and School Support. This team meets bi-monthly to plan and discuss school improvement initiatives.
- Established partnership with Learning Forward and University of Maryland College Park's Center for Educational Innovation and Improvement to implement the improvement science process to improve science curriculum and instruction in Dorchester County and Prince George's County Public Schools. Effective practices from this pilot will be scaled statewide to support school improvement work.
- Established process and resources to vet English language arts (ELA) curriculum. The Maryland ESSA Consolidated Plan requires curriculum vetting for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement. The process and resources developed will be scaled statewide for use with CSI schools and made available to all Maryland school systems.
- Served on the CCSSO State Agency Advisory Board to review and edit Principles of Effective School Improvement documents.
  - Presented at CCSSO's Leveraging Leadership for School Improvement Meeting to discuss data-informed decision making for school improvement, the purpose of this presentation was to share effective practices to leverage data to inform school improvement initiatives.
  - Participated on CCSSO's School and District Improvement (SDI) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS), the information obtained from this meeting is used to inform implementation of school improvement priorities.
- Established comprehensive year-long professional learning plan for school systems focused on effective practices for school improvement. All professional learning experiences will target central office staff, school leadership teams, and teachers.

## FOSTERING THE GROWTH OF EFFECTIVE LEADERS

- The National Governor's Association published a paper highlighting Maryland's effort to improve school principal quality.
- Completed Charles County Public Schools pilot of an electronic evaluation system for principals (TEAMS).
- Collaborated with Prince George's County Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the Nation Urban League as part of the Wallace Foundation's ESSA Leadership Learning Community. Information from this meeting is used to inform content for Maryland's Turnaround Leadership Academy for school leadership teams identified for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI).
- Managed SREB's educator effectiveness grant. Grant funds are used to support professional learning experiences and the implementation of

divisional priorities associated with school improvement and leadership development.

- Revised process to collect evaluation data and conducted a webinar to share revised process with school systems. Evaluation data is submitted by school systems to MSDE annually, the office is beginning to take steps to improve the collection and submission of data in an effort to improve validity and accuracy.
- Presented at University of Maryland University College Using Data to Guide Student Learning meeting. The purpose of the presentation was to discuss strategies to connect educator evaluation to student learning.
- Facilitated professional learning experiences on effective evaluation practices for principals in Montgomery County Public Schools.
- Established comprehensive year-long professional learning plan for school systems focused on effective leadership practices. Professional learning experiences will target central office staff and school leadership teams.

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS (PSEL) RUBRIC

- Partnered with the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) to develop resources to support educator evaluations. This includes:
  - Creating the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) rubric. These standards are used to guide principal evaluations and licensure, the rubric defines the actions of a highly effective, effective, developing, and ineffective principals for each standard in the PSEL. MSDE will provide evaluator training on the rubric during the summer of 2018.
  - Ensuring student learning objectives (SLO) aligned with the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA). MSDE is piloting a new integrated science assessment and is developing guidance documents and sample SLOs to support the development of high-quality SLOs.
- The PSEL rubric also supports consistency in evaluation processes across the state.
  - Conducted regional meetings with 78 principal supervisors representing 22 school systems. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss transition to the PSEL; provide feedback on the PSEL rubric; and discuss the process for submitting evaluation models for approval.
  - Conducted a meeting with the Maryland Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals to receive feedback on the PSEL rubric and discuss upcoming professional learning experiences for school leaders.
  - Conducted regional workshops with principal supervisors on evidence to support PSEL rubric descriptors, equitable practices for school leadership, and summer professional learning experiences for school leaders.

- Established a partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) at West-Ed to develop resources and professional learning experiences that support the transition to the PSEL. MACC is developing training materials that MSDE will use this summer to prepare principals and principal supervisors to implement the new standards.
- Conducted virtual teacher and principal evaluation focus groups with the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) and Education First. Teachers, assistant principals, principals, principal supervisors, and representatives from institutions of higher education participated in the focus groups, the purpose of the focus groups was to obtain information to inform improvements to Maryland's teacher and principal evaluation system.
- Established partnership with the Regional Educational Laboratories (REL) Mid-Atlantic Excellence Educators Alliance. REL will provide research and technical support as the division works to improve Maryland's teacher and principal evaluation system.
- Participated on CCSSO's Teaching, Leading, and Learning (TLLC) School Leader Learning and Development workgroup, this meeting is used to inform improvements to Maryland's teacher and principal evaluation systems and professional learning experiences to support leadership development.

## OFFICE OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION

The Office of School and Community Nutrition provides leadership for food and nutrition programs in Maryland and ensures that programs meet or exceed federal standards. The focus of this office is on promoting nutritious foods for students year round, in and out of school time. The office is responsible for administering federal child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program. Additionally, the office provides nutrition related resources, comprehensive training, and other opportunities to enhance the nutrition programs.

### WELLNESS PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

- Coordinated, planned, and promoted the 2017 Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week, typically held the week of September 25-29. This week promotes a "Farm to School" mentality, a term which aims to bring locally produced foods into school cafeterias and promotes hands-on learning activities such as farm visits, school gardening, and culinary classes.
  - The State kick-off event was held at Crellin Elementary School in Garrett County. Guests were invited to tour Sunshine Farms, located on the school's campus, taste test local food items from farmers, sample student recipes, and enjoy lunch with students and teachers in the cafeteria.
- Conducted assessment and training on the quality of meals served in the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program At Risk After School Meals component.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS

- Collaborated with the MSDE Office of Child Care to provide monthly administrative training on the Child and Adult Care Food Program new meal pattern regulations.
- Supported the Maryland School Nutrition Association in planning the annual conference and convention.
- Provided administrative training for local school systems operating the school meals program.
- Provided three week-long culinary skills boot camps to food and nutrition staff in St. Mary's County Public Schools, Frederick County Public Schools and Baltimore City Public Schools.

### USING DATA AND TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS

- Developed operational training videos for school meal programs.
- Currently developing training videos to support the Child and Adult Care Food Program new meal pattern regulations, operations, and meal-time environment.
- Partnered with the University of Maryland Extension, Food Supplemental Nutrition Education division to provide SELECT (Student Engagement & Lunch Room Environment Culinary Training) to eight middle schools in Baltimore City and Montgomery County Public Schools. SELECT provides culinary and Smarter Lunchrooms training, technical assistance, and nutrition education during health classes.
- Provided two six-hour trainings and technical assistance on the 2017 Administrative Review Process to local public school districts, non-profit private schools, and residential child care institutions on resource management, procurement, and other requirements.
- Conducted 315 site reviews of the Summer Food Service Program across the State.
- Presented at the September 2017 USDA Child Nutrition Access and Accountability through Technology meeting on Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Accountability.

### USDA FOODS/DISTRIBUTION

- Coordinated and hosted the eleventh annual Maryland USDA Foods

Processing Show and Training Forum which was attended by all local school districts.

- Presented on the USDA Foods Processing Program and the USDA Foods Recipient Agency Handbook at the National School Nutrition Association Meeting.
- Lead Processing Committee Meeting of the American Commodity Distribution Association at the 2017 Annual Industry Meeting for USDA Food Contractors and Suppliers.
- Maryland school districts spent \$25 million dollars on USDA Foods entitlement in School Year (SY) 2017-2018, marking the highest amount of entitlement spent to date.

## OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Office of Pupil Transportation and Emergency Services is responsible for developing and implementing statewide policies, procedures, and plans related to all aspects of transporting students safely to and from public schools as provided by State and Federal laws and the bylaws of the State Board of Education. The office provides technical assistance for training school bus drivers, coordinates activities with the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration, researches and develops data concerning finance and legislation, and maintains databases for school bus driver disqualification and school bus driver accidents.

### KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE

- Took part in both an all hands briefing and full drill scenario of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power plant exercise through the Maryland Emergency Management Agency.
- Visited and toured several different county's pupil transportation operations. The office gained insights into inspection processes and an understanding of a variety of defects that occur in older school buses. Inspections were attended in Frederick County, Talbot County, Charles County, and Kent County. Information gathered from each inspection will be shared as best practices with other counties.
- Took part in planning and presentations during the Biannual Drivers Instructors Conference located at Salisbury University. Driver Trainers ensure that all school vehicle drivers are knowledgeable when it comes to student safety measures and how to manage the many issues that may arise during everyday transportation of students. Participants gained valuable understanding about the significance of being a driver instructor.
- Presented COMAR school vehicle driver disqualification criteria at the first annual Baltimore City Contractors Meeting.
- Completed and submitted the National Loading and Unloading Zone survey.
- End of school year information and school bus closeout information was obtained and documented.
- Maintained the submissions and deletions from the Disqualified Driver Database.
- The Maryland Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT), in conjunction with MSDE, held its annual fall conference in October 2017 in Ocean City, MD. Transportation Directors from all 24 local school systems attended the conference. Participants gained information from representatives from the Motor Vehicle Administration, as well as information surrounding the transportation of students with disabilities.
- MSDE began a public awareness campaign to inform the public about the dangers of passing a school bus when its red stop signs and lights are active. To support the campaign and to bring more awareness to the dangers, MSDE worked with Montgomery County Public Schools, the Maryland Center for School Safety, and the Maryland State Police to create a Public Service Announcement involving school bus safety. Filming occurred in Montgomery County with the support of multiple bus drivers, students, and the State Police.
  - The video was released across multiple viewing platforms through utilizing YouTube, resulting in over 5,000 views and was shown at the conference for the National Association of Pupil Transportation

(NAPT), as well as the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDAPTS).

## MARYLAND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association derives its authority from both MSDE and the local school systems. The Association supervises and administers rules and regulations, and provides leadership in conducting athletic programs at the high school level. It also recommends the development of new and innovative athletic programs, as well as other functions. The MPSSAA helps promote and strengthen personal development of student athletics and participation, and aims to build community partnerships that directly impact and increase student achievement, participation, and health/safety.

### CONDUCTING PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

#### MINDS IN MOTION

- The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association Minds in Motion program began in 1989, awarding students who achieved a 3.25 GPA or better while participating in interscholastic athletics. Each year over 40,000 Minds in Motion certificates are requested from the MPSSAA to award to deserving students.
- The program expanded in 2008 to award scholarship recipients. Applicants must have a minimum 3.25 unweighted overall GPA and have participated in interscholastic athletic activities sponsored by MPSSAA during their high school careers. Selected male and female recipients receive a \$1,000.00 scholarship and are honored at a luncheon at M&T Bank Stadium in late May/early June.
  - In 2017 the MPSSAA awarded 14 scholarships and have provided \$117,000.00 in scholarships to graduating student-athletes over the last 10 years.
  - 41,515 Minds in Motion Certificates were requested from member schools for students who have reached this achievement.

### STATE TOURNAMENTS

- Conducted the smooth operation of eight state tournaments during the fall of 2017. Individual and team championships were crowned in the sports of Golf, Girls Cross Country, Boys Cross Country, Girls Field Hockey, Girls Soccer, Boys Soccer, Girls Volleyball and Football.
- Fall State Tournament Sportsmanship Awards were presented in Cross Country, Girls Field Hockey, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball and Football. The following schools were awarded with sportsmanship plaques:
  - Cross Country** – Gaithersburg, Reservoir, Hereford, Boonsboro
  - Girls Field Hockey** – James Hubert Blake
  - Girls Soccer** – River Hill
  - Boys Soccer** – Great Mills
  - Girls Volleyball** – Smithsburg
  - Football** – Henry A. Wise

### INSPIRING ATHLETICS

- Contributed to the National Federation of State High School Association's (NFHS) "My Reason Why Campaign", a campaign that encourages student-athletes and coaches to share the reason why they participate in extracurricular activities and athletics. The campaign is driven to reinforce the mission of participation in extracurricular activities as character building tools that enhance the entire educational experience.
- Former President of the MPSSAA Mr. Ron Belinko, who retired in 2011 after a 46-year career as a teacher, coach and athletic administrator with Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), was inducted into the National

Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) Hall of Fame. At the state level, Ron devoted countless hours to the Maryland State Athletic Directors Association (MSADA) and MPSSAA. He has been the NIAAA Leadership Training coordinator for the MSADA for 18 years and has been an instructor for 11 Leadership Training Courses. He taught Leadership Training Courses during professional development days at schools throughout the Baltimore area. He has made presentations and taught classes at 30 MSADA conferences.

### BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Continued partnership with the eKnowledge Donation Project to provide donated ACT/SAT Prep Courses to Maryland students. The ACT/SAT Donation Project waives the complete \$350 course price for the SAT or ACT Prep Programs, which work on all devices and computers: iOS, Android, Google, Apple, and PC.
- Continued partnerships with other community partners to provide free tickets, competition balls and equipment, and other items that contribute to the overall smooth operation of the MPSSAA, Local School Systems, and State Tournaments.
- Continued partnership with Wendy's. Outreach through the Wendy's Heisman High School Scholarship Program produced a National Finalist for the fourth time in the last five years and the third straight. Mr. Ian McGrory, senior at Queen Anne's High School, was selected as one of 10 National Finalist. Mr. McGrory earned a \$5,000.00 college scholarship as a National Finalist.

### MEETING THE ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- Registered and certified nearly 4,000 contest officials for fall and winter sports season.
- Developed a new Recruitment and Retention program to assist local boards of officials in recruiting and retaining new officials. In the first week, over 25 new potential officials had expressed interest.
- Assisted local school systems in writing special accommodations for students with disabilities to participate fully on high school teams.
- Continued to supervise and administer all rules and regulations in accordance with the State Board of Education regulations and those of the MPSSAA Board of Control.
- Distributed nearly 6,000 complimentary coaches' passes to local school systems.
- Provided free publications to member schools in the form of rule books, bulletins, handbooks and state tournament programs.

## SCHOOL FACILITIES BRANCH

The School Facilities Branch is responsible for developing the standards and guidelines for the planning, construction, and maintenance on Maryland's school campuses. The branch provides leadership and technical assistance to Maryland's 24 school systems, and the Maryland School for the Blind with regard to long-range planning; capital improvement program development; education specifications; and the design, construction, and maintenance of school facilities. The branch administers the review and approval of locally funded school construction projects and leases by the State Superintendent of Schools, helping to literally build a stronger school system.

### BUILDING SCHOOL SYSTEMS

#### COORDINATION WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM (PSCP)

- Participated in six regional meetings with all 24 school systems to discuss the Draft Maryland Sufficiency Standards.
- Participated in the review and recommendation of major projects for the Capital Improvement Program, a county improvement plan that is annually reviewed. The School Facilities branch also coordinated with PSCP to provide guidance to Dorchester County and Caroline County on their upcoming Capital Improvement Plan Submissions.

## STATE AND LOCALLY- FUNDED PROJECTS

- Completed planning and design reviews of 20 school construction project submissions on behalf of the State Superintendent of Schools and/or the Interagency Committee on School Construction.
- As of June 2017 – approximately 230 projects are currently shown on the “active” projects list in planning, design, or construction, members of the School Facilities team attended approximately 60 design meetings.

## BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

- In coordination with Jamie Bridges, PSCP Baltimore City Program Manager, the branch has monitored progress being made with the 21st Century Facilities Program. This program aims to build future-focused, adaptable, sustainable, and high-quality schools that inspire learning and support the educational success of Baltimore City Public Schools students
  - Attended meetings with the Maryland Stadium Authority, the City Planning Department, and Baltimore City Schools and have provided design review guidance on 12 projects.
  - A School Facilities Branch employee presented the Governor’s Citation at the Ribbon Cutting for Frederick Elementary School, which was one of the first two schools to open as part of the program.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

- Participated in the review of applications from eight library systems for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Capital Grant Program with the Division of Library Development Services, these recommendations involve the distribution of \$5 million statewide for library facilities renovation and new construction.
- Presented a draft to the Designees of these guidelines. The branch is currently waiting for clarification on if the guidelines can be released prior to the School Library Media Program Standards being updated.

## SCHOOL-BASED WELLNESS CENTERS

- Partnered with the Student Services and Strategic Planning Branch to review the designs of five School Based Wellness Centers opening in the 2017-2018 school year in three different jurisdictions.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- Assisted Laura Collard, Executive Director of the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE), in two presentations associated with a proposed Sustainable Schools Framework for schools in Maryland through a grant that MAEOE received.
  - A contributing factor for the implementation of the Framework is the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, which is a plan for the restoration of the Bay and its tributaries and the lands that surround them. The plan includes an Environmental Literacy Goal and three Environmental Literacy Outcomes, including the Sustainable Schools Outcome.
- Coordinated the collection of annual assurances from school systems regarding use of green cleaning. Some progress items of note: All counties use green cleaning methods; twenty-one LEA’s have procurement policies in place for green cleaning initiatives and provide staff training; eighteen LEA’s have Board of Education approved green cleaning policies and have green cleaning specifications.

## MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

The Maryland Center for School Safety provides Maryland School Systems, private schools, and nonpublic schools with the framework and structure to build a stronger community, focused on school safety and emergency preparedness. The Center works with MSDE, Law Enforcement, and Fire/EMS to continuously provide our school systems with options to improve school safety measures and to create more efficient and detailed emergency response systems. Through collaboration with local school systems, community members, and

locally and nationally based public safety organizations, the Maryland Center for School Safety has changed the face of safety in our State by focusing on preparedness, prevention, and response to school-related emergencies and crisis.

## PROVIDING SAFETY TRAINING TO LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND BEYOND

- Held and sponsored a one day School Safety Summit in April 2018 for school superintendents, school administrators, counselors, psychologists, security staff, school resource officers, emergency managers, and Fire/EMS providers.
- Hosted a series of three one-day school safety trainings known as the Maryland School Safety Initiative 2018, “Recovering the School Community from Crisis” in collaboration with Michele Gay, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Safe and Sound Schools.
  - Michele Gay assembled a team to present three full-day workshops in three distinct geographic regions of the State. The presenting team consisted of Michele Gay, Lisa Hamp, a Virginia Tech survivor, Dr. C.J. Huff, former Superintendent of Joplin, MO schools, Kiki Leyba, Columbine teacher and survivor, Dr. Melissa Reeves, Immediate Past President of the National Association of School Psychologists, and John McDonald, Executive Director of Safety, Security, and Emergency Planning for Jefferson County Schools, Colorado.
- Provided technical assistance to the Baltimore City School Police Force in the revision and updating of their General Orders, policies, and procedures.
- Conducted school emergency preparedness training for several private schools.
- Hosted a two-day train-the-trainer active shooter class in partnership with the ALICE Training Institute.
- Co-sponsored and hosted, along with the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, a one-day school safety workshop titled, The Briefings: Resiliency and Recovery after a School Crisis in Alexandria, VA.
- Held two, two-day behavioral threat assessment trainings for school administrators, counselors, psychologists, security staff, and school resource officers from across the State during April and May 2018 in Anne Arundel and Montgomery Counties.
- Hosted a one-day gang awareness training for School Safety and Security Directors.
- Hosted a series of three-evening community presentations delivered by Frank DeAngelis, former Principal of Columbine High School on the tragedy at Columbine and lessons learned. The presentations were aimed at parents, teachers, and high school students and were held in Queen Anne’s, Fredrick, and Prince George’s Counties.

## REGULARLY COMMUNICATING FOR SAFER SCHOOLS

- Held weekly School Safety Conference Calls to discuss critical issues that impact school safety and emergency preparedness. National and State-level information as to terrorist-related threats are addressed on the calls, as well as a roll call discussion among local school systems, nonpublic, and private schools as to respective school safety issues or concerns that included school shootings and social media threats.
- Participated in monthly Maryland Opioid Operational Command Center prevention and recovery meetings.
- Hosted meeting with MSDE for school superintendents, police chiefs/ sheriffs, school administrators, counselors, psychologists, and school security directors to discuss the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018.
- Provided testimony in support of school safety bills during the 2018 Maryland legislative session.

## PARTNERING FOR SAFER SCHOOLS

- Provided immediate and direct assistance, support, and outreach to St. Mary’s County Public Schools in response to the tragic school shooting at Great Mills High School.
- Participated in monthly national level school safety conference calls with other school safety centers.

- Attended and participated in local school systems community school safety meetings following the tragic school shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL.
- Held School Safety Subcabinet and Advisory Board meetings in June 2018 to discuss the new roles of each body.

## DIVISION OF CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS

The Division of Career and College Readiness promotes quality career and postsecondary education preparation for Maryland students. This division is at the forefront of Maryland’s Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs. CTE is a critical component of the P-20 system of education and workforce development in Maryland. CTE provides high school students an opportunity to pursue a sequential technical and academic program of study, leading to advancement in a career field and preparation for college.

## CTE INVOLVES THOUSANDS OF MARYLAND STUDENTS

- There are 103,538 students enrolled in CTE courses throughout the State, another 56,600 students are enrolled at the postsecondary level.
- CTE programs are highly successful: 99 percent of CTE high school students graduated, and 60 percent of CTE high school students were dual completers (completed both a CTE approved program of study and met the University of Maryland’s course entry requirements).
- Career and Technology Student Organizations (CTSO) provide knowledge and skills to prepare students for college and career success. These organizations are designed to be an integral part of the CTE instructional program. By directly integrating into Career and Technology Education programs of study, CTOS extend teaching and learning through various programs, business and community partnerships and leadership experiences at the local, state, and national levels.
  - There are four CTOS in Maryland, with over 11,000 student members distributed among 178 individual chapters statewide.
  - CTSO students consistently earn industry certifications or licensure at higher rates than non-CTSO students.
- An indication of a student’s readiness for college is their ability to meet course entry requirements for the University System of Maryland (USM). Students meeting this requirement and the requirements of a CTE program of study are designated as dual completers.
  - Many CTE programs are aligned to a Technical Skill Assessment (TSA), leading to an industry credential or early college credit. Earning both industry certifications and early college credit provide students a competitive advantage in their transition to careers and college.
  - TSA achievement for CTE students has shown steady progress with a current pass rate of 78 percent and 6,196 students earning industry certifications or related college credit.

## ACCESS TO CTE PROGRAMS

- Each Local School System (LSS), in partnership with a Local Advisory Council (LAC), determines the CTE programs to offer in its high schools. CTE programs are offered in all LSSs. Depending on the size of the school and availability of programs, students may choose from between eight and thirty-nine different CTE programs.
  - CTE programs are offered in traditional Comprehensive High Schools. Fifteen of Maryland’s 24 LSSs also operate CTE Centers, where students travel to a central location for their CTE programs. A third delivery model is a Technical High School, in which all students receive both the academic and technical components of their high school studies.
  - Across Maryland, CTE programs are offered in 199 Comprehensive High Schools, 16 CTE Centers, and 14 Technical High Schools.

## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS THROUGH CTE

- CTE programs of study include a series of courses, usually a sequence

of four courses. Students who progress into upper-level CTE courses are engaged in more advanced career preparation including opportunities for internships, earning industry certifications and/or early college credit related to their chosen career pathway.

- Many programs are aligned to an industry certification. This provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate technical skill attainment and career advancement; however, students are not required to pass industry certification exams to earn a high school diploma. Students with an industry-recognized credential may also receive articulated or transcribed credit in postsecondary CTE degree and certificate programs.
- CTE students and their parents are more satisfied with their education compared to non-CTE students. In fact, 82 percent of CTE students are satisfied with their ability to learn real-world skills in school, compared to only 51 percent of non-CTE students.
- College and careers are both key aspirations for parents and students. Parents and students are both attracted to the ‘real world’ benefits of CTE programs- 86 percent of parents and students want the opportunity to gain more real world skills in high school.

## PROMOTING CTE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

- The division received a grant from Advance CTE and the Siemens Corporation to promote career and technology education. The division invited two local school systems, Talbot and Charles counties, to participate in the initiative. Focus groups were held with parents, counselors, teachers, and students to identify messages that communicate the availability of high-quality CTE programs. Parents, teachers, and counselors learned about the many STEM-related CTE programs as well as more traditional programs that are offered.
- A Social Media Guide was developed and piloted in both Charles and Talbot County Public Schools. The guide is available on the MSDE website and has been distributed throughout the local school systems’ CTE Offices. CTE programs are being promoted through the use of social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

## PROVIDING ACCESS AND EQUITY TO STUDENTS IN CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

- The Access and Equity in CTE Design Team held its first meeting in August 2017. The design team is charged with developing a generic student application for admission to CTE programs that can be adopted locally. The optional application could be used by CTE directors who may want to include it in their admissions process, the goal is to provide technical assistance to help ensure that recruitment and admission processes are designed to avoid discriminating against students in protected classes/ groups who are interested in enrolling in CTE programs.
- During its first meeting The Access and Equity in CTE Design Team reviewed and made recommendations regarding two templates: a draft CTE application and a Guide to the CTE Application Process. Both templates were created using information found in the Technical Assistance Bulletin on Providing Access and Equity to Students Interested in Career and Technology Education as well as sample application documents from a variety of school systems. The Guide to the CTE Application Process was created after the internal team reviewed a similar document designed to guide students as they applied to magnet schools.
- Improving Transitional Services for Students with Disabilities: A CTE specialist serves on the Maryland- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) Core Leadership Team. The NTACT team is charged with prioritizing and focusing on achievable and meaningful equitable goals in the area of secondary transition to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in Maryland. This team is composed of Special Educators from local school systems and representatives from postsecondary institutions, community organizations, and state, local, and federal agencies. CTE directors present and meet with local Transition Coordinators on best practices for ensuring accessibility for students with disabilities in CTE programs.

## HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (HSEP) CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAM OF STUDY (POS)

- The Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (HSEP) Career and Technology Education (CTE) Program of Study (POS) was developed in 2005 – 2006 with representatives from: local school systems; community colleges; baccalaureate degree granting institutions; representatives from industry who are experts in the field; workforce development professionals; economic development personnel; and MSDE.
- HSEP is offered in 15 of Maryland's 24 school systems: Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, Washington and Worcester Counties, as well as Baltimore City.
- The HSEP program of study is guided by an advisory committee which is representative of experts in the field of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.
  - The Mid-Atlantic Center for Emergency Management, located at Frederick Community College, provides an annual professional development for teachers in HSEP.
  - Presentations are provided to teachers from State and Federal agencies in the field including the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, forensic scientists, law enforcement, Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) experts, and others related to this career area.
- Local school systems have articulation agreements with their local community colleges for college credits into related post-secondary programs in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.
  - Additionally, there are two statewide articulation agreements. The University of Maryland, University College provides three credits for two different college courses, depending upon the student's college major.
  - Frederick Community College offers six credits, related to the pathway the HSEP student has completed. Frederick Community College's program is eligible as a statewide program and students may attend without paying out-of-county tuition.
- In January 2018, the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council within the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation approved the Emergency Management Specialist as a registered apprenticeship program in Maryland. This apprenticeship presents opportunities for employees seeking emergency management careers, employers seeking emergency management employees, and the profession to develop individuals with training, education and expertise in the emergency management discipline.
- The Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness CTE Program:
  - Prepares high school students for further education and careers in the homeland security and emergency preparedness professions.
  - Integrates government, academia, and private sector training/ educational initiatives.
  - Helps students understand how the United States and its interests worldwide are protected against threats to public safety, both natural and manmade.
  - Teaches effective communication, preparedness, detection, prevention, response, and recovery methods to protect the United States and its interests.
  - Aligns with the national skills standards in this career area including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) Responder Guidelines and the Office of Domestic Preparedness Security Guidelines for Prevention and Deterrence.
  - Culminates with a Capstone Project where students have the opportunity to extend and apply their knowledge in this career field under the supervision of an industry mentor and/or work-based learning setting.
  - Provides students with college level work and articulated credit and/ or an industry recognized credential.
- The program offers three career strands: Homeland Security Sciences Pathway, Criminal Justice/ Law Enforcement Pathway and the Information/ Communications Technology Pathway. These strands align with the six mission areas of the United States Department of Homeland Security:

- Intelligence and Warning
- Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Key Assets
- Border and Transportation Security
- Domestic Counterterrorism
- Defense against Catastrophic Threats
- Emergency Preparedness and Response

#### SKILLS USA: CRAFTING FUTURE LEADERS, A PARTNERSHIP OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND INDUSTRY WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE AMERICA HAS A SKILLED WORKFORCE

##### HAILEY BRENNEN, SKILLS USA PRESIDENT

- Hailey Brennen, State President of SkillsUSA Maryland and Senior at Dulaney High School in Baltimore County, is a program completer of two CTE programs: HVAC and Project Lead The Way- Engineering. Along with CTE classes, she has taken Advanced Placement courses at school and Dual Enrollment courses at the Community College of Baltimore County. Along with the five courses she has taken at CCBC she also earned 23 articulated credits from her CTE high school programs. Currently, Hailey is an Operations intern at a local mechanical contracting company where she works approximately 10 - 15 hours per week applying her technical, organizational, and computing skills. She has recently been recognized as one of four students honored as Future Craftsmen by the Building Congress and Exchange, and has been selected as the outstanding senior in her HVAC program. Hailey enjoys collecting classic rock music and going to concerts. After high school, she plans to attend a four-year university to major in mechanical engineering.
  - Hailey has already been accepted to UMBC, and Drexel --- she was also recently accepted to the University of Maryland School of Engineering for Mechanical Engineering.

##### CHANDLER KERR – SKILLSUSA MARYLAND MEMBER, NATIONAL GOLD MEDALIST AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITOR

- Chandler Kerr, PrintED Program of Study completer, graduate of the Center of Applied Technology North, Severn, MD, and two-time SkillsUSA national gold medal winner, represented the United States in the 2017 Worldskills Print Media Technology competition in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Kerr, along with eleven other CTE state champions from across the country participated in the 44th international event with 1,300 competitors and 100,000 student and public spectators representing 77 member countries and regions.

##### LAILA MIRZA - SKILLS USA MARYLAND MEMBER, STATE PRESIDENT, STATE GOLD MEDALIST AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIAN

- Laila Mirza, a senior completing the Project Lead the Way Pre-Engineering Program of Study at Worcester Technical High School, Newark, MD, was elected to serve as National Parliamentarian of SkillsUSA. Having already served as SkillsUSA Maryland State President, Laila ran for national office and was elected through a formal elections process in the SkillsUSA House of Delegates during the 53rd annual SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference held last summer in Louisville, KY. She also placed fourth in the nation in the Prepared Speech competition.

### DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

MSDE's Division of Rehabilitation Services offers programs and services that assist individuals with disabilities to access equal opportunities for education and employment. DORS is composed of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program and Disability Determination Services (DDS). DDS makes medical decisions regarding disability claims filed by Maryland residents for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). DORS' mission is to provide leadership and support in promoting the employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence of individuals with disabilities.

#### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

#### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

- In July 2017 students were interviewed by the Maryland Community Connections (MCC) staff and discussed their interests and skills for summer job opportunities. All students were required to commit to a six-week work program. About 60 individuals were selected to participate in this program, which kicked off with a summer program orientation and a one-week work-readiness training program. Employers for this program included: Marshalls; T J MAXX; T&V Repair Services; Sweet Tooth Bakery; PetSmart - Cat Adoption Center; Books-A-Million; and several child care centers.
  - Many students were offered jobs that will continue into the school year, due to the hard work demonstrated at their work sites. One such employer had three students and offered all three of them positions.
  - A closing celebration was held in August 2017 that included DORS staff, MCC, employers, parents, and the students.

#### CARROLL COUNTY

- The Westminster DORS office hosted an Afterhours Event with the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce. The event was planned and sponsored by partners on the Carroll County Transition Council, including the Arc of Carroll County, Goodwill of the Monocacy Valley, Mosaic, STEP, Target Community and Educational Services, and Carroll County Public Schools. The event educated local businesses on the Summer Youth Program and allowed partners to network for potential placements for the upcoming summer program.
  - The Carroll County DORS office hopes to place approximately 100 students in work-based learning experiences this summer, which will require a large number of employers who would be willing to provide these students with opportunities.

#### REVERSE JOB FAIR

- Collaborated with Eastern Shore workforce partners in hosting a Reverse Job Fair at the Salisbury One-Stop Job Center in March 2017. This innovative concept is a twist on the typical job fair; the spotlight is on candidates who set up displays highlighting their experience and skills, and employers explore the room and engage with candidates to find the talent they need.
  - Thirty candidates participated in a week-long job readiness boot camp and marketed themselves at the event, and at least 15 businesses attended. There were on-the-spot interviews and even several job offers.

#### SIMPLIFYING CAREER PATHWAYS

##### PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (PRE-ETS)

- Pre-ETS provides job exploration counseling and work-based learning experiences. These experiences may include in school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting and/ or internships, as well as counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and instruction in self-advocacy.
- Continued efforts to engage with partners to improve Pre-ETS services. This included:
  - Working with Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration to update a Memorandum of Understanding.
  - Selecting four local education agencies to implement proposed initiatives in response to the Maryland Work Based Learning Collaborative.
  - Planning and scheduling quarterly meetings with our partners.
- Pre-ETS services continue to be improved by updating staff Pre-ETS materials, producing and distributing the second quarterly Pre-ETS newsletter, and having DORS staff attend the statewide Project Search conference.

#### CHARLES COUNTY JOB DEVELOPERS ALLIANCE

- The Alliance, formed in 2011, has a mission to place qualified candidates into employment by providing consistent and superior employment services for employers and individuals in Charles County. The program is comprised of staff from: DORS; Charles County Public Schools; Abilities Network; ARC of Southern Maryland; Charles County Commission for Individuals with Disabilities; Creative Options; Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Institute; Life, Inc.; Melwood; New Horizons Supported Services; Pathways; Spring Dell Center; Southern Maryland Community Network; and Tri-County Council for Southern MD Workforce Services.
- For National Disability Employment Awareness month 2017, the Alliance chose the theme: Try Me—Together We can Make a Difference. The Alliance created a video with this theme to raise awareness of disability employment issues and to celebrate the many and varied accomplishments and successes of workers across southern Maryland who have differing abilities.

#### ON THE JOB TRAINING

##### WORKFORCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTER (WTC)

- The WTC received another three-year CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) Accreditation valid through April 2021 for the following programs:
  - Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation Services.
  - Employment Skills Training Services.
  - Independent Evaluation Services (Adults).

##### STARBUCKS INCLUSION ACADEMY

- Continued partnership with Starbucks and the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), making this DORS' second Starbucks Inclusion Academy. This program helps individuals with disabilities gain meaningful work experience through hands on learning with Starbucks. Six DORS' consumers from several Maryland counties started the six week training program in September.
  - The program included visits from Starbucks District Manager Aaron Thompson for a coffee tasting.
  - Students spent time in a classroom setting at the WTC and learned to refine customer service and workplace skills and also received hands-on experience working in the Starbucks community store on Ashland Avenue in Baltimore.

##### OFFICE FOR BLINDNESS AND VISION SERVICES (OBVS) SIGNATURE COURSE

- This four-week innovative program, offered in partnership with Métier Services, Inc., is designed to address the needs of customers who are blind, and returning to, or entering the workforce for the first time.
  - Classes are taught in a group setting with a daily schedule incorporating group and individual instruction in topics related to career exploration and readiness such as:
    - Employment search methods.
    - Organizational skills.
    - Networking and money management.
  - The class began in August 2017 and had five participants and resulted in students feeling more confident in their abilities to obtain employment.

##### CVS/DORS PARTNERSHIP

- DORS' WTC and CVS Health partnered to offer a retail training program for Maryland vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers. This 10-week program includes four weeks of classroom training and mock store instruction at the DORS' WTC, coupled with six weeks of in-store work experience at a CVS retail store. The goal of the program is to prepare the trainees for competitive integrated employment in a retail environment.
- CVS Health has built an ongoing relationship with the VR program nationally and is developing workforce initiatives with VR agencies in a number of states. To support the Maryland program, CVS Health has donated financial and personnel resources to develop and implement the training, including the following: shelving and products for the mock store; curriculum and

other training materials; training for DORS staff; and work experience and support at Baltimore area stores that will host the trainees.

- The training program is scheduled to be held three times in calendar year 2018, providing opportunities for up to 24 individuals.
- The first class graduated in April 2018. At the completion of the training the trainees applied for positions at CVS Pharmacy locations in their communities, as well as at other similar retail businesses. Currently, three of the current trainees have already been offered positions in CVS stores.
  - DORS held a celebratory event in April 2018 to honor the first graduates and to highlight the partnership between DORS and CVS Health.

## REAL- LIFE IMPACT

### DAVID GESSWEIN

- DORS' consumer, David Gesswein was barely 19 when he was severely injured in a car accident. The accident resulted in physical disabilities that require the use of a mobility chair. During the early 1990s, David received a number of services from DORS, including office technology training, college tuition assistance, and help getting an internship at Aberdeen Proving Ground. These services helped him gain a permanent position that he has held for more than twenty years. However, it is the DORS program that helped him get a modified van that did the most to help David keep his job.
  - In January of 2016, David began working with a DORS Rehabilitation Counselor because his old van had over 300,000 miles on it and he needed a replacement. It took more than a year to get through the process, but David got his new van in 2017.
  - Modified vehicles are an excellent example of how DORS' services help people with disabilities get and maintain jobs. Without these critical services, employment would be impossible for many people with disabilities.

### ATTILA MILLER

- Attila is a transitioning youth who received Pre-Employment Transition Services from a DORS Rehabilitation Counselor. As part of Attila's Individualized Plan for Employment, he worked with DORS and a job coach to achieve a position at FR Conversions. He works in the warehouse, stocking shelves, operating a forklift, processing orders, and assembling kits for shipping.

## RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEES FOR HARD WORK AND BOOSTING MORALE

### KAREN A. BONCZEWSKI

- Disability Determination Services (DDS) Management Associate Karen A. Bonczewski was recently awarded the Social Security Administration's Associate Commissioner's Citation based upon her sustained commitment to providing quality customer service to the Maryland DDS and the citizens of Maryland.
  - Karen has served as DDS' Management associate since 2001. She was honored for consistently going beyond expectations when handling critical agency calls and correspondence for claimants, their family members or representatives. She has developed professional relationships with all of the Maryland Congressional Offices.

### JANET PANTALEO

- Rehabilitation Technical Specialist, Janet Pantaleo, won the Maryland/DC chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (DC/MD AER) award in Recognition of Excellence in Direct Service in Rehabilitation. This award is for a professional who provides excellent direct rehabilitative service or support to enhance the lives of individuals with visual impairments.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

- DORS will begin conducting a new Customer Satisfaction Survey which will be sent out to consumers. All survey responses will be sent out using consumers' email addresses and then collected on-line; a letter will be

sent to those consumers who do not have a valid email address.

- Respondents will be asked the same general questions about their overall satisfaction with DORS and with their current DORS counselor.
- Respondents will be asked questions related to their satisfaction with the DORS process and service provision, quarterly reports summarizing Customer Satisfaction Survey responses will be provided to DORS Executive Staff.
- The information gleaned from these surveys will augment the information from the Governor's customer services surveys and help the division to better serve our consumers.

## OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The Office of Human Resources is committed to providing equal access to employment opportunities in education throughout Maryland, while delivering effective human resource services to applicants and employees in a fair and equitable manner.

### USING DATA AND TECHNOLOGY TO KEEP MSDE DIVISIONS ORGANIZED

- Facilitated updates to divisional operational plans, goals and objectives during quarterly staff meetings. This initiated a full review of internal business processes, forms and communications to improve the effectiveness of human resources services to agency customers.
- Facilitated bi-weekly Workday meetings with the Accounting-Payroll Office and the Division of Rehabilitation Services Human Resources to further business process improvements related to the Workday Statewide Human Resources System, including audits for timekeeping and leave management activities and processing accuracy and timeliness, with the goal of reducing payroll errors and improving MSDE Scorecard issues.
  - Activities are underway to prepare for Go Live of the Health Benefits module in 2018.
- Provided employee on-boarding, employee benefits administration, personnel transactions, and staff development activities for agency new hires, supervisors, and managers related to Supervision, Performance Evaluation Program (PEP), Timekeeping, FMLA, and Interview Skills, etc.
  - Achieved a 96 percent PEP completion rate for MSDE for the 2017 PEP Cycle, and are on track to repeat this for the current PEP Cycle.

## PARTNERING TO PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN MARYLAND EDUCATION

- Implemented several enhancements to position management and recruitment activities. These included taking over the hiring freeze process for MSDE divisions and facilitating vacancy changes that will expedite hiring and properly aligning staff resources, in addition to partnering with the MSDE Office of Communications to increase the use of social media in recruiting.
- During the first-half of fiscal year 2018, the office recruited and filled a total of 123 regular positions.
- Facilitated monthly staffing meetings with Juvenile Services Educational System (JSES) management and hired 40 JSES staff so far this fiscal year (27 were Teachers).
  - Administered hiring and retention incentive program for credentialed staff in juvenile education facilities, and revised interview process to speed up teacher hiring, the office is currently exploring active recruiting methods for hard to fill teacher positions.

## DIVISION OF BUSINESS SERVICES

The Division of Business Services is responsible for developing and implementing agency administrative and financial policies, procedures, and systems. This includes budget, accounting, administrative services, and financial reporting and coordination. The division also administers the Nonpublic Textbook Program, Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program, and co-administers the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program with the Public School Construction Program.

The division places a special focus on efficiency, developing new and better ways to make sure certain tasks are completed smoothly.

## USING DATA AND TECHNOLOGY TO KEEP MSDE DIVISIONS ORGANIZED

- Worked to ensure that its fiscal support for certain programs is responsive to recent organizational changes at MSDE.
- Tailored budget status documents to the specific needs of division managers to ensure that all division managers see their up-to-date program and sub-program assignments. This process involves careful coordination and re-organizing of data.
- Worked closely with the Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT) on coordinated, statewide approaches to purchasing technology. A statewide enterprise approach to procuring technology services and equipment is challenging to implement, but it results in lower costs, greater efficiencies, and elimination of duplicative efforts among agencies.
- Launched an internal web site that contains all of MSDE's core business forms and information. The site allows all staff to have access to the most up-to-date information, all in one place.
- Developed new software to handle the cost allocation process, moving away from a software system that is cumbersome and inadequate. This process assigns payroll data to detailed account codes, and it is a key part of tracking and reporting activity on federal grants. The new system is expected to launch by June 2018.
- New technology tools have been recently developed to track procurements and to enhance management of the BOOST program.
- Made extra efforts to clear old and unusable inventory from the basement of MSDE's 200 West Baltimore Street building.

## RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEES FOR HARD WORK AND BOOSTING MORALE

### GLENN FOSTER

- In August 2017, Glenn Foster, the Support Services Supervisor for the Administrative Services Branch in the Division of Business Services, was named the MSDE Employee of the Month! Glenn was recognized for his outstanding customer service, high-quality work, and consistent willingness to help, along with a constant positive attitude! Glenn oversees the agency's central copy room, mail room, supply room, and vehicle fleet.

## OFFICE OF AUDIT

The Maryland State Department of Education's Audit Office is designed to ensure that MSDE's budgets, financial resource allocation and usage are in compliance with State and Federal laws, regulations, and practices. The office works closely with local school systems to make certain State funds are used correctly and effectively.

## USING DATA TO KEEP MSDE DIVISIONS AND LOCAL SYSTEMS COMPLIANT

### SUMMARY OF FEDERAL UNIT

- Performed multiple desk reviews of Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Library, Government, and Community Colleges Fiscal Year (FY) 16 Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFR) and completed all associated Single Audit Reports.
- Quality Control Reviews have been completed for 10 Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firms.
- Performed three desk reviews of Non Profit Organizations FY16 CAFR and completed Single Audit reports.
- Performed 24 desk reviews of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) FY16 CAFR and Single Audit reports completed.
- Performed four desk reviews of the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) FY16 and Single Audit reports completed.
- Revised and updated audit checklists to comply with Government Auditing Standards, federal laws, and regulations that are effective as of FY17.

- Coordinated FY17 Annual Financial Report (AFR) submissions for Local Education Agencies (LEA).

- Reconciled 24 LEA's AFRs to the Audited Financial Statements.

- Provided technical assistance to LEA staff, independent CPA firms, and nonprofit sponsors regarding interpretations of laws, regulations, and other guidance, in order to clarify the compliance and reporting requirements of the State and Federal governments.

- Completed 24 desk reviews of the LEA FY17 CAFR and Single Audit reports covering an estimated \$814 million in federal grant awards.

- Completed five desk reviews of FY 17 Community Colleges CAFRs and Single Audit reports covering an estimated \$5 million in federal grant awards.

- Performed quality control reviews for five CPA firms which consisted of 16 major programs, totaling an estimated \$196 million in federal grant awards.

- Provided technical assistance to the Maryland State Library regarding library audits during their transition to an independent agency.

- Provided technical assistance to LEA staff, independent CPAs, and nonprofit organizations regarding compliance and reporting requirements imposed by State and Federal regulations.

### SUMMARY OF STATE AID UNIT

- Performed and completed five scheduled State Aid Audits of LEAs. These audits resulted in a recovery of funds totaling \$2,000.00.
  - Performed and completed two additional State Aid Audits of LEAs, resulting in a recovery of funds totaling \$15,305.00.

### SUMMARY OF INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT

- Completed and closed five Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) Fraud Hotline investigations and are currently in process with two additional investigations.

- Served as coordinator and point of contact for the triennial OLA Fiscal Compliance Audit, as well as collected, organized, and prepared the agency responses for the OLA Disclosure Letter that was issued to OLA in September 2017 and January 2018.

- Coordinated efforts, obtained data requests, and resolved potential issues for the OLA Resource Sharing Agreement Audit, which included a review of two MSDE contractual agreements.

- Served as point of contact for all activities with the external auditor performing the FY17 Single Audit and assisted the responsible Divisions with preparing the Internal Control Questionnaires that were reviewed by the Audit Office prior to submission to the external auditor.

- Provided advice to Divisions throughout the period regarding Single Audit requirements, COMAR, general control requirements, appropriate grant management procedures and other audit related matters.

- Provided accurate and real time responses to the Office of Communications and Partnerships regarding information requests received from external entities.

- Coordinated the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) audit of MSDE's compliance with the Comptroller's Office Year End Closeout Procedures which resulted in one finding. Assisted responsible Division in developing the Agency's response.

- Coordinated efforts, obtained data requests, and resolved potential issues for the OLA Resource Sharing Agreement Audit, which includes a review of two MSDE contractual agreements.

- Served as point of contact for all activities with the external auditor performing the FY17 Single Audit, and assisted the responsible Divisions with preparing the Internal Control Questionnaires that were reviewed by the Audit Office prior to submission to the external auditor.

- Provided advice to Divisions throughout the period regarding FY17 Single Audit requirements, COMAR, general control requirements, appropriate grant management procedures, and other audit related matters.

- Provided accurate and real time responses to the Office of Communications and Partnerships regarding Public Information Acts requests received from external entities.

- Developed the agency's management representation letter for the State's FY17 CAFR.

- Prepared the Management Representation Letter and coordinated the development of the agency's response for three preliminary findings regarding the OLA Resource Sharing Agreement Audit.
- Issued a report regarding the status of MSDE's corrective action plan for findings contained in the Department of General Services inventory compliance audit (issued October 2016).

## OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

The Office of Information Technology develops and implements technology plans, strategies, policies, and standards designed to maximize the benefits of technology investments. This office works diligently to ensure the efficiency, safety, and strength of MSDE's technology and web-based services. In addition to strengthening our connections, the office secures better access and connectivity to the latest technology and web-based systems for our Maryland schools, and provides structure for the use of Instructional Technology.

- Migrated the national PARCC system to an MSDE temporary hosted site due to the contract ending until a new vendor was instituted.
- NOGA version 2.0 was completed in June 2018 with expanded functionality. NOGA is a program for MSDE's Division of Business Services and serves as an electronic system for the MSDE Notices of Grant Awards (NOGAs). This program handles a primary business process and throughput of a \$7.5 billion budget, of which \$7.2 billion is awarded to the local school district systems as grants.
- Sponsored the development of the Maryland Digital Learning Plan (also known in previous editions as the state Instructional Technology Plan.)
  - The MSDE Chief Information Officer (CIO) along with the Local Education Agency (LEA) CIOs listed below contributed to the Digital Learning Plan's Infrastructure section. LEA CIO leaders: Drew Moore (Harford), Robert Langan (Wicomico), Greg Barlow (Anne Arundel). Further contributors were Rick Lippert (Calvert), Stephen Dolney (formerly Montgomery), Youssef Antar (Prince George's), Christopher Doyle (MSDE), Davina Pruitt (UMD) and Jim Corns (Maryland Society for Educational Technology).
- MSDE and Department of Technology (DoIT) Maryland were granted eligibility by the USAC (FCC) for the Additional Discount to Match State Funding for Special Construction Program. If a state provides eligible schools and libraries with funding for special construction charges for high-speed broadband then that meets the FCC's long-term connectivity targets, the E-rate Program increases an applicant's discount rate for these charges up to an additional ten percent to match the state funding on a one-to-one dollar basis.
  - As an outcome of the National Governor's Association's Broadband initiative, MSDE worked with the Governor's Office, the Education Super Highway, the Public School Construction Program, Board of Public Works, and the DoIT Department for the final phase of broadband fiber installation in Maryland's K-12 schools.

- Opened an Office Information Technology (OIT) walk-up Service Desk to better serve the clients at MSDE's 200 W. Baltimore St. location. It has been very popular with MSDE staff and has facilitated the remediation and encryption of more than 60 laptops at MSDE.
- Coordinated and secured funding to outfit the TierPoint datacenter with server hardware (VmWare) licenses and NetApp SAN storage. VmWare is a cloud computing and platform virtualization software, that provides more stability. Included was the Library for the Blind (LBPH) with their infrastructure procurement of all new equipment.

## MAINTAINING BUSINESS PROGRAMS AND APPLICATIONS

- Performed Commodity Classification Automated Tracking System (CCATS) system/hardware layer upgrades. CCATS network restructuring allowed direct access to other state agencies directly from the TierPoint datacenter.
- Successfully implemented required federal code and database changes into production for Perkins Secondary and Post-Secondary programs for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018.

- Developed a new Bus Accidents application using new technology to replace the old legacy application.
- Programmed the new Non-Public TextBook (NPTB) application, scheduled for delivery in 2018.
- Designed a brand new interface for School Users and MSDE Users Portal, the new version includes secure portals for different users. The individual School Users Portal will now allow self-maintenance.
- Created a new data model for Childcare Maryland EXCELS Participation tables. New mapping to load the data sets were created and data loads were created as well.
  - Created new scripts to pull data files from Axway Secure File Transfer system into Maryland Excels Participation and scheduled the jobs for daily loads.

- Completed design of new data models for populating Maryland Approved Programs (MAP) Apex data sets and loaded the dimension tables for data entry systems.
- Designed and Developed MOSOR, a Sex Offender Registry application through an external interface between the MSDE Educator Information System (EIS) and the state's Department of Public Safety (DPSCS.) The office also developed an interface for the Educator Information System (EIS) Licensure-Data department to check the certified educators against.
- Developed the Maryland STEM Innovation Network dashboards: STEM Advanced Placement Exams; STEM Career Technology Education Programs; STEM Teacher Certifications; and STEM Computer Science Courses. These dashboards provide a reporting of student access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) instructional content as well as data on the effectiveness of STEM programs and instruction as measured by student performance and course progression. This dashboard supports the expansion of STEM education as well as an initiative included under Race to The Top (RTTT).
- Developed the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Dashboard. This dashboard shows the results of the annual Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), which is administered to students entering public kindergarten at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the assessment is to determine students' preparedness for the kindergarten curriculum. Students are assessed across four developmental domains: Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Well-Being and Motor Development, Social

## KEEPING MSDE UP-TO-DATE - INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEM UPGRADES

- Migrated Oracle servers for the Web Data Collection System (WDCS) project. This included upgrading several WDCS databases from Oracle version 11g to 12c business and application databases for reporting (OBIEE) and web front ends (Webcenter.)
- Involved with the major release of the 2017 Report Card and Maryland K-12 websites.

## KEEPING MSDE SECURE

- McAfee Security is now deployed across all MSDE client PC's and servers within the datacenters.
- A Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Project Outline was proposed to: Identify/Inventory all systems with PII; Review/remove PII where not required; Remediate and encrypt PII where it is necessary.
- Strengthened MSDE's security posture and infrastructure, there are scheduled Penetration tests for MSDE this year.
- Currently reviewing the newly issued DoIT Policies that now individually match the Federal National Institute of Technology series with staff. The office is currently working with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability on reviewing Security and Privacy policies and addressing any gaps by creating proposed policies.
- Embarked on a major initiative to remove unsupported Operating System, database, and application servers, the first phase in this project will be completed by the end of 2018.
- Obtained two firewalls through DoIT from the Department of Commerce

and upgraded the ports to high speed in late 2016. They were then placed into service in early 2017 in the local MSDE network to improve our security fabric.

## MSDE PROCUREMENT

- Completed Procurement on several large projects including; the request for proposals (RFP) for MSDE's Learning Management System (LMS), which is in the final phases of review and could potentially be used state-wide.
- Partnered with other state agencies on the Streaming Services RFP so it can be leveraged across the state.
- Advised and Consulted on Cost Allocation of off-the-shelf software for Business Services to reduce consulting costs.

## WORKING TOGETHER

- As an active member of the Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium (MEEC), MSDE procures IT products and services where economically feasible. In 2017, MEEC has extended the Hardware agreements through 2026 with 39 vendors participating. The new Software agreements include Microsoft, Apple, security and training products, and the Services agreements cover Audio-Visual Services; Call Centers; InCommon (consortium); IT Professional Consulting Services, Library eResources and Microsoft's Premiere services.
- The office hosted one Baltimore City, Youth Works student intern during the Summer of 2017 and another unpaid intern for 3 months. It was a pleasure to work with these talented students.

## JUVENILE SERVICES EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Juvenile Services Education System provides students residing in a Maryland Department of Juvenile Services residential facility with daily instructional programming and services. JSES functions as the local school system for these students and provides services to ensure optimal educational access.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

- Science teachers from all thirteen Juvenile Services Education System schools engaged in the Next Generation Science Professional Development. Staff from the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability involved teachers in collaborative work to support new standards.
- Piloting the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (Map) at two schools – Thomas J.S. Waxter and Backbone Mountain. Teachers and administrators have been engaged in a series of professional development sessions aimed at understanding data in order to facilitate learning in the classroom. Teachers have been engaged in activities to examine student growth measures as students engage in adaptive achievement tests that determine their readiness to learn new skills.
- JSES has secured five companies to provide substitute teachers for the 2017-18 school year.
- Students and staff at six JSES schools (Backbone Mountain, J.Deweese Carter, Green Ridge, Meadow Mountain, Savage Mountain and Victor Cullen) have implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) into their daily school day.
  - PBIS is a decision making framework that guides the selection, integration and implementation of evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving outcomes for all students to meet the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. The division collaborated with the Department of Juvenile Services in the training and implementation of this framework.

## TAKING STUDENTS TO THE NEXT LEVEL OF SUCCESS

- The division had seventy students earn their GEDs since the beginning of the school year.

- Seventy-three students obtained their high school diploma in Fiscal Year (FY) 17.

## GETTING CREATIVE

- A partnership with the "Voice" writers of University of Maryland was developed for a school to collaborate in writing and exchanging poetry and essays anonymously.
- A student had a poem selected for publication in the 2017 Words Unlocked Anthology.

## ENHANCED INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROVIDES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION: UNJAMMED

- Three JSES schools participated in the second cohort of Unjammed. Unjammed is a multi-day intensive training on blended learning that brings teams of teachers and administrators together for a summer "tech camp."
  - Schools were given Makerspace packages which included coding, design, and creative packages.
  - JSES currently has six schools that have Unjammed training through the Unjammed project. JSES had a student place 4th in a National Coding Contest.

## OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The Government Relations Office at MSDE is the official liaison to the Federal government and the Maryland General Assembly. This office regularly collaborates with other State agencies, local agencies, and key stakeholders on issues and policies that affect Maryland public education. The Office of Government Relations works directly with National, State, and Local governing bodies to communicate and reach compromises on legislation that reflect the needs of all Maryland schools.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOLS

- Monitored over 300 pieces of legislation as well as the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Operating Budget during the 2018 Legislative Session, developing letters of information as needed, and redesigning the tracking system for mandated reports.
- Engaged and presented to the Maryland General Assembly, the Department of Legislative Services, and the local Superintendents.
- Responded to requests for information from other governmental agencies as well as the general public in a timely and accurate manner.
- Presented information to the State Board of Education as well as other MSDE workgroups regarding legislation from the 2018 Legislative Session.
- Worked directly with legislative and governmental officials and other advocacy and interest groups to reach compromises in legislation, as well as communicated with and advised the Governor's Legislative Office on education policy.
- Compiled and submitted the weekly legislative agency report to the Governor's Legislative Staff during the legislative session.
- Planned and led semi-annual meetings of the State Superintendent's Non-Public Schools Workgroup in November 2017 and May 2018, attended by non-public school officials, local school system federal program coordinators, and MSDE staff.
- Prepared federal FY 2018 Federal Priorities for inclusion in Governor Hogan's annual submission to Maryland's Congressional Delegation and submitted monthly status reports to the Governor's Office.
- Responded to all calls and emails from Congressional Delegation staff within 24 hours.
- Participated in Council of Chief State School Officers Federal Liaison Network (CCSSO) monthly calls, as well as in-person meetings. CCSSO is a nonprofit organization of public officials that head departments of elementary and secondary education.
- Monitored federal legislation and the appropriations process, as well as presented information to the Maryland/DC Association of School Business

Officials and Eastern Shore Superintendents and prepared analysis of President's budget proposal, as well as appropriations letter to Congressional delegation.

- Prepared weekly transmittals of information for local school system superintendents.
- Drafted two legislative proposals for the State Board of Education to submit to the Governor's Office for consideration.
- Arranged meetings with key legislators on Education and Budget Committees.
- Worked with MSDE staff to draft letters of information, support, and opposition for bills introduced during the 2018 legislative session.

## OFFICE OF FISCAL PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION

The Office of Fiscal Planning, Research, and Evaluation supports the department's integrated approach to fiscal and program transparency and accountability. The functions of this office include: providing leadership, coordination, consultation, and technical assistance to local school systems in the area of fiscal education policy and procedures, strategic planning, and federal grant management. The office also provides administrative and policy support to the Deputy State Superintendent for the Office of Finance.

### USING DATA AND TECHNOLOGY TO KEEP MSDE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS ORGANIZED

- Reviewed the annual budget submissions and maintenance of effort certifications for all 24 local school systems, as well as published the Annual Maintenance of Effort Report in December 2017.
- Conducted the annual review of all 24 local school system master plans and budget documents to ensure current and prior year budgets are aligned with school system priorities, the resulting Education Fiscal Accountability and Oversight Act report was published in December 2017.
- Published the required monthly, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reports; which requires federal award data to be made available to the public, federal fund recipients are required to report data on each subgrant issued with the federal funds.

## OFFICE OF RESEARCH

MSDE's Research Department, now in its second year, is designed to provide educators and leaders with better educational data and analysis, which can be used to strengthen schools and classrooms. Through original research and collaborative projects, as well as through analysis of pre-existing information, the office stands at the nexus of Maryland's school improvement efforts.

### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS TASK FORCE

- Held regular meetings of the High School Graduation Requirements Task Force, a program that is charged with studying and making recommendations on credit and program requirements for obtaining a Maryland High School Diploma, assessment requirements, and options for awarding high school diplomas. The Task Force also considers existing Maryland statute and policy recommendations generated by the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, and integrates research and data into the rationale for its recommendations.
- Representatives from numerous stakeholders participate in the taskforce including: teachers; counselors; parents; students; principals and superintendent associations; Maryland associations for community and independent colleges; state agencies and offices such as the Higher Education Commission, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Department of Human Services, Governor's Office, and Office of the Attorney General; business groups such as the Maryland Chamber of Commerce and Maryland Business Roundtable; and advocacy organizations for English Learners and special education students.

- To date, Task Force members have learned about the current Maryland graduation regulations and policies, and discussed the needs and goals for Maryland high school students. The Task Force has divided into committees and is currently laying the groundwork for its recommendations. Members continue to learn from research and best practices to generate an innovative, actionable set of recommendations to ensure that all students leave high school with the knowledge and skills to prepare them for successful entry into the post-high-school option of their choice.

### EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

- Held approximately 25 workshops and trainings on evidence-based decision-making, including:
  - How to evaluate existing evidence to determine whether research links a specific program or activity to a desired outcome.
  - How to generate new evidence to determine whether or not a program or activity is linked to a desired outcome.
  - What is required by ESSA regarding evidence-based decision-making.
- Participants include Local Education Agency (LEA) and MSDE staff in the areas of Title I, Title II, Title III, early childhood education, math, English Language Arts, and English Language Learners. Workshops have been held specifically for district staff in Baltimore City, Prince George's, and Queen Anne's Counties.





**BECAUSE  
OPPORTUNITY  
BELONGS  
TO EVERYONE**

**MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**KAREN B. SALMON, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Schools

**ANDREW R. SMARICK**  
President, Maryland State Board of Education

**LARRY HOGAN**  
Governor

200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
[MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://MarylandPublicSchools.org)

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TTY/TDD 410-333-6442, Fax 410-767-0431.

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