TO:	Members of the State Board of Education
FROM:	Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
DATE:	June 27, 2023
SUBJECT:	Strategic Plan and Engagement Report Release – Phase 3

Purpose

To provide a briefing to the Maryland State Board of Education on the development of the final phase of the Strategic Plan, and to request the adoption of the Maryland State Board and Department of Education's complete Strategic Plan: Maryland Transforms, which includes Phases 1, 2, and 3.

Background/Historical Perspective

Since late Fall 2021, the Maryland State Board of Education and Maryland State Department of Education have worked to engage stakeholders across Maryland to support the development of a multiyear Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan anchors the mission, vision, values, priorities, enablers, goals, and flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies to realize the Blueprint for Maryland's Future's promise of an excellent and equitable education for every student.

In October 2022, Phase 1 was released and included the details of the vision, mission, values, priorities, and enablers. In February 2023, the release of Phase 2 included the goals and metrics to track progress and measure success in connection to each priority and enabler. Today's Phase 3 release includes the flagship strategies, initiatives, and programs which outline the concrete work that needs to be completed for achieving each priority and enabler.

Action

Request to approve and adopt the Maryland State Board and Department of Education's complete Strategic Plan: Maryland Transforms, which includes Phases 1, 2, and 3.

Attachments

Strategic Plan Phase III Release & Beyond.pdf

Maryland Transforms: Strategic Plan Guidebook.pdf

Maryland Transforms: Strategic Plan Engagement Report.pdf

The Maryland State Board & Department of Education

Strategic Plan & Engagement Report

Phase 3 Release and Beyond

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION | JUNE 27, 2023

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

Presented By | Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Introduction to the Strategic Plan

Blueprint for Maryland's Future

Strategic Plan Development

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Engagement Methods

Strategic Plan Elements

What's Next?

Introduction to the Strategic Plan

The Maryland State Board of Education and Maryland State Department of Education have developed a multiyear Strategic Plan composed of three phases leading up to June 2023.

Why do we need a Strategic Plan?

Educational experiences in Maryland before the COVID-19 pandemic did not prepare all students. **Opportunity and achievement gaps were prevalent** prior to the pandemic for historically underserved groups.

The pandemic has only exacerbated our challenges. **A return to normal is not good enough.** We must tackle the gaps that have persisted in our state.

Successful organizations use a strategic planning process to ensure focused progress and **alignment around clear priorities, goals, and flagship programs.**

Implementing a Strategic Plan will **anchor and reinforce the Blueprint** legislation into the organizational fabric of the department and its everyday work.

Strategic Plan Foundational Elements

PHASE 1

The **vision and mission** for transforming public education in Maryland.

The **values** that inform our everyday practice and relationships with our diverse communities and stakeholder groups.

The **priorities** that must be achieved for a truly successful educational experience for every Maryland child, from early childhood to college and careers.

The **enablers**, or structural conditions, regarding data, resource allocation, human capital, and support systems that need to be in place for the priorities to be achieved.

PHASE 2

The **goals and metrics** to track progress and measure success in connection to each priority and enabler.

PHASE 3

The **targets*** that must be met to fulfil our goals on a specific timeline. The **flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies** outlining the concrete work that needs to be completed for achieving each priority and enabler.

Final targets will be released by late Fall 2023 using the Spring 2023 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program results

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future

The Blueprint creates the conditions for truly reimagining the education experience from early childhood to postsecondary success.

About the Blueprint for Maryland's Future

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021. The legislation presents a **once-in-a-generation opportunity to fulfill the promise of an excellent and equitable education** for all children in Maryland.

The Maryland State Board and Department of Education are collaborating with local education agencies and boards, institutions of higher education, the Accountability and Implementation Board, employers, and stakeholders across the state to **implement the initiatives in each of the Blueprint's five pillars.**
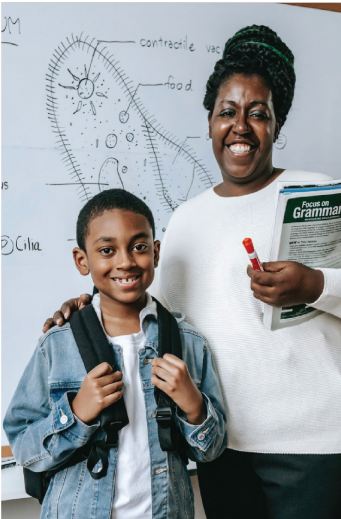
The Blueprint Five Pillars

5 BLUEPRINT PILLARS

The Blueprint encompasses five pillars, each including key initiatives aimed at transforming the quality of education in Maryland, and narrowing and closing opportunity and achievement gaps.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	HIGH-QUALITY & DIVERSE TEACHERS & LEADERS	COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS	MORE RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS	GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY
• Support more families to access no cost, high-quality Pre-K • Scale the impact of Patty & Judy Centers • Expand family options through public/private Pre-K Partnerships	• Increasing starting salary to minimum $60,000 • New career ladder and incentives for National Board Certified Teachers up to $17,000 • Raising expectations for teacher preparation and induction	• New college and career readiness standard by 10th grade • Aligned curriculum resources and assessments • College and career readiness and support pathways • Expanded career and technical education system	• Community Schools and School-based Health Centers expansion • Concentration of Poverty grants • Targeted supports for historically underserved students	• Expert Review Teams • Accountability and Implementation Board • Local education agency Implementation Plans • Maryland State Department of Education monitoring and technical assistance

Strategic Plan Development

Engaging with stakeholders to define the mission, vision, values, priorities, enablers, goals, and metrics, as well as flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies.

Members:

Charles R. Dashiell (Subcommittee Chair)

Clarence C. Crawford (SBOE President)

Susan J. Getty (SBOE Vice President)

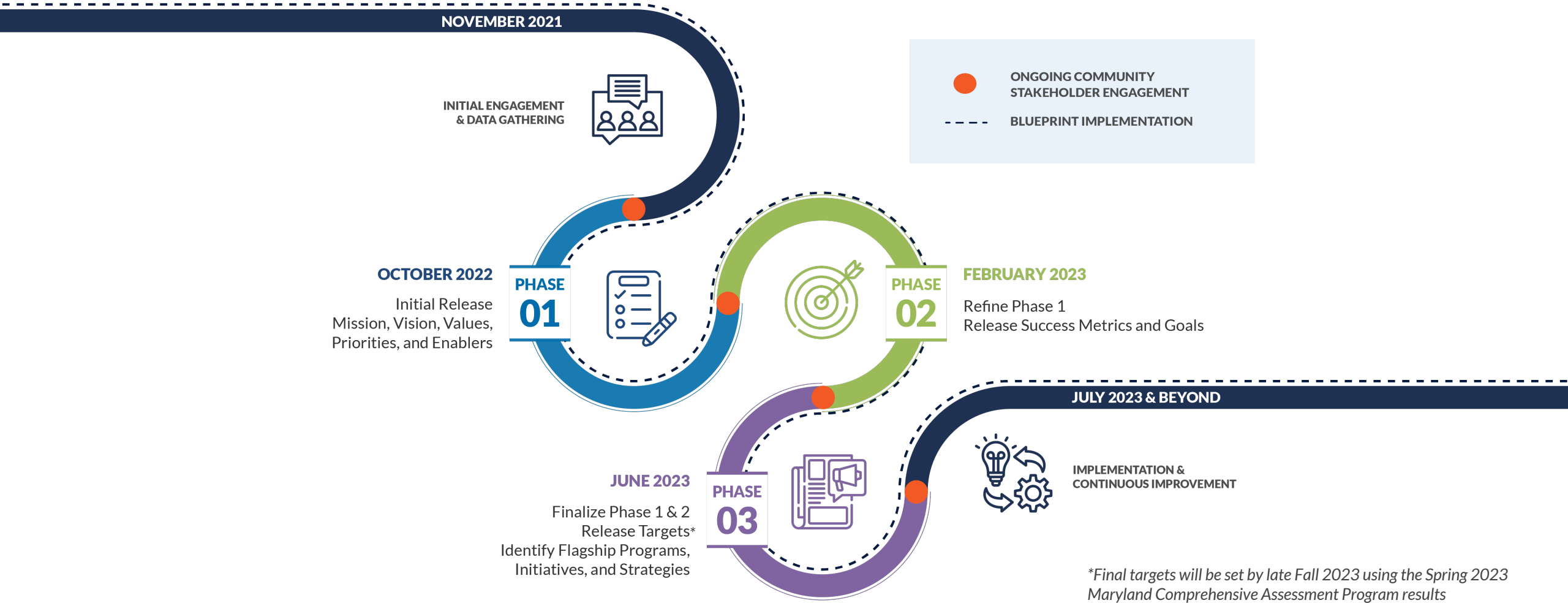**Jean C. Halle**

Rachel L. McCusker

The Strategic Plan Subcommittee

Formed in January 2022 to lead the strategic planning process in collaboration with Superintendent Choudhury and MSDE Staff.

Supported by MSDE staff:

- Office of Communications and Community Engagement
- Office of Research, Planning, and Program Evaluation

Strategic Plan Timeline

NOVEMBER 2021

INITIAL ENGAGEMENT
& DATA GATHERING

● ONGOING COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- - - BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION

OCTOBER 2022

PHASE 01

Initial Release
Mission, Vision, Values,
Priorities, and Enablers

PHASE 02

FEBRUARY 2023

Refine Phase 1
Release Success Metrics and Goals

JULY 2023 & BEYOND

JUNE 2023

PHASE 03

Finalize Phase 1 & 2
Release Targets*
Identify Flagship Programs,
Initiatives, and Strategies

IMPLEMENTATION &
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

*Final targets will be set by late Fall 2023 using the Spring 2023
Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program results

Strategic Plan Development Phases

PHASE 1 November 2021 - October 2022	PHASE 2 October 2022 – February 2023	PHASE 3 February 2023 – June 2023
Kickstarted long-term engagement with a focused effort on "expanding the tent." Focused on gaining input from a wide range of stakeholders representing the diversity of the state. The feedback we received helped shape the Phase 1 elements: the vision, mission, values, priorities, and enablers. Released the mission, vision, values, priorities and enablers.	Reaffirmed the Phase 1 elements Continued engagement, including regional data walks and presentations aligned to the priorities. Developed aligned goals and metrics linked to each of the priorities and enablers in Phase 1. Released goals and metrics.	Continued engagement introducing a new engagement method: strategic planning charettes. Identified flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies to achieve the goals developed in Phase 2. Release targets* that must be met to fulfil our goals on a specific timeline. Publicly share the flagship strategies, initiatives, and programs. Release the completed Strategic Plan.

Final targets will be set by late Fall 2023 using the Spring 2023 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program results

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

The primary aim of engagement for the strategic planning process was to gain input from a wide range of stakeholders that represented the diversity of the state.

Engagement Process Objectives

Build processes and **create space for stakeholder input** to develop a Strategic Plan

Ensure flexible, responsive and **iterative communication with stakeholders**
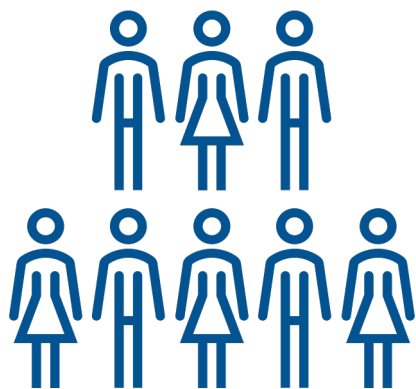
Engagement Objectives

Seek out and **prioritize** new and **underrepresented voices**

Learn what matters most to our communities to transform public education in Maryland

Stakeholder Groups

STUDENTS

FAMILIES

EDUCATORS & SCHOOL/DISTRICT STAFF

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

ADVOCATES & EXPERTS

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS

Unprecedented Outreach to Stakeholders

29,200+ SURVEY RESPONSES

440+ ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

1,640+ LISTENING SESSION PARTICIPANTS

8,700+ EVENT PARTICIPANTS

405+ DATA WALK PARTICIPANTS (5 REGIONS)

120+ CHARETTE PARTICIPANTS

40,550+
CONNECTIONS MADE

Outreach Examples & Figures

Below are a few examples of some of the strategies used to promote engagement for the strategic planning process.

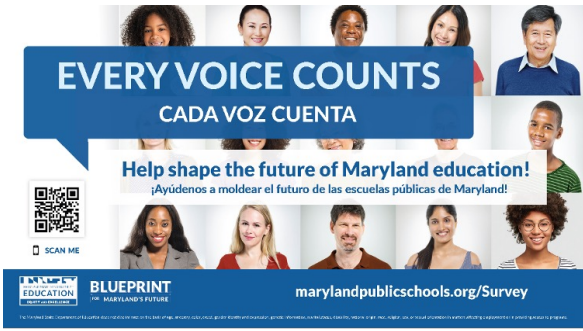**EVENT PROMOTION**

133 virtual and in-person events interacting with 8,700+ participants

SOCIAL MEDIA

More than 1,176,295 impressions were recorded during this time

POSTCARD MAILER

Over 70,00 direct mail pieces were distributed

Outreach Examples & Figures (Cont.)

Below are a few examples of some of the strategies used to promote engagement for the strategic planning process.

DOOR HANGERS

More than 25,000 door hangers were distributed

DIGITAL MEDIA

Videos received over 12,000 views and continue to be available

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A total of 3,500 toolkits were emailed to more than 350 groups, over 33,000 physical flyers were distributed, and more than 6 million impressions were recorded

Engagement Methods

Engagement in the third phase involved discussions centered around the priorities and enablers outlined in the Strategic Plan to develop programs, initiatives, and strategies through interactive planning charettes.

Methods of Engagement

A multi-pronged approach was developed to structure engagement for the strategic planning process to **ensure flexible, responsive and iterative communication with stakeholders.** A combination of virtual and in-person engagement methods were implemented to ensure engagement of stakeholders across Maryland's diverse landscape.

Survey

The survey was launched on January 25, 2022, and it continues to be open. **More than 29,200 respondents completed the survey during this period, with representation from every Maryland local education agency.**

Survey respondents represented a wide range of stakeholder groups, with parents/guardians, students, and teachers, representing the largest number of participants.

The purpose of the survey was to allow as many people as possible, in every community and every stakeholder group, to provide feedback on the state of public education in Maryland and the top priorities for improvement.

SURVEY
Key Takeaways

More than 86% of respondents believe that the quality of public schools is "extremely important" for Maryland's success as a state.

We see great consistency in responses when comparing percentages across stakeholder groups, race/ethnicity, and regions. For stakeholder groups, for example, the percent who answered "extremely important" ranges from 84% for students to 90% for the higher education community.

68% of participants have a positive opinion of the performance of Maryland's public schools.

We see important variations by stakeholder group. For example, only 54% of respondents in the business community have a positive opinion, compared to 77% of school leaders. We also see important variations by race/ethnicity, with 81% of Asian respondents holding a positive view compared to 68% of Blacks/African Americans and 66% of Hispanics/Latinos.

SURVEY Key Takeaways (Cont.)

49% of respondents selected **Reading and Writing in the Early Grades** as their top priority for improving public education in Maryland.

Nearly 1/3 of respondents chose **Supports for Social, Emotional, and Mental Health** or **Improving Math and Science Skills** as their top priority.

More than 27% of respondents chose **Developing Excellent Teachers** or **Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Teamwork Skills** as their top priority.

Black respondents included **Resources to Underserved Communities** in their top five priorities.

Business leaders and teachers included **Career and Technical Education** in their top five priorities.
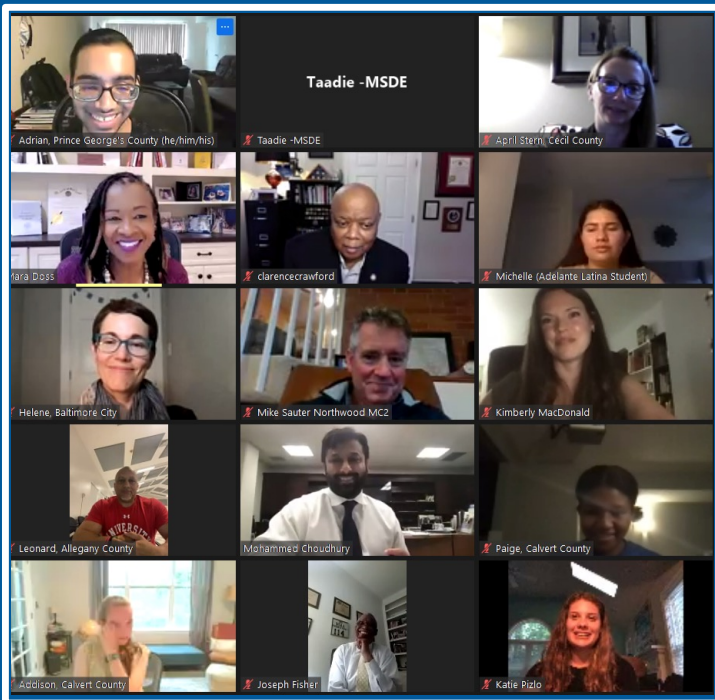
Roundtables

The purpose of the roundtables was to engage in dialogue with a specific stakeholder group or with a range of stakeholders on a specific topic through a small group discussion format.

ROUNDTABLES Key Takeaways Phase 1

Participants in the educator roundtables stressed the urgency of **addressing representation gaps in the teaching profession**, supporting new teachers' growth through close collaboration, observation, and feedback from highly effective mentors, and expanding access to job-embedded professional learning opportunities.

Students and parents/guardians, in turn, advocated for **stronger wraparound supports, engagement, and better educational resources** for families to support their students' success in school.

Leaders from the business community passionately spoke about the need to **elevate career and technical education and ensuring better coordination between industry and the educational system** to facilitate students' access and success with career exploration, work-based learning, and job placement opportunities.

ROUNDTABLES
Key Takeaways
Phase 2

Different from Phase 1 roundtables which covered a wide range of topics and stakeholder groups, Phase 2 roundtables prioritized students, families, educators, and business leaders.

Students pointed out that they **should have the ability to change their path in high school when taking CTE courses**, and not be forced to commit to the same set of courses.

Families discussed the **importance of teacher training, support, and incentives** for recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, especially within historically disadvantaged communities.

Educators addressed the **challenges that must be overcome as we prepare for a diverse and quality workforce** such as barriers to entry and disinterest in the profession.

ROUNDTABLES
Key Takeaways
Phase 3

Similar to Phase 2, the Phase 3 roundtables prioritized students, families, educators, and community partners.

Students emphasized the **importance of exposure to specific career programs** that allow students to pursue careers they are interested in.

Community partners talked about **partnerships with the public schools, offering classes and advice to high school students, and early exposure to college** for younger students.

School staff members discussed how they support **social-emotional learning, health, wellness, and safety** in schools.

Listening Sessions

The purpose of listening sessions was to provide a flexible format for stakeholders and community partners to share input on the Strategic Plan. Listening sessions were hosted by external groups with guidance and technical assistance provided by Maryland State Department of Education staff.

The number of participants in each session ranged from small to large groups where facilitators posed the same questions in each group and note-takers recorded participant responses. Listening sessions were held in-person and virtually.

LISTENING SESSIONS
Key Takeaways

Many of the themes that teachers, students, parents/guardians, and business leaders emphasized in the roundtables also emerged in the listening sessions.

Participants stressed the importance of strengthening health and wellness supports for students. They also emphasized **creating seamless and equitable pathways to college and careers** and the expectation that institutions of higher education, employers, and the educational system must collaborate effectively to make those pathways a reality for every Maryland student.

Listening session participants also called attention to additional priorities.

Participants discussed the need to address teacher shortages and **expanding high-quality Pre-K and early childhood programs.**
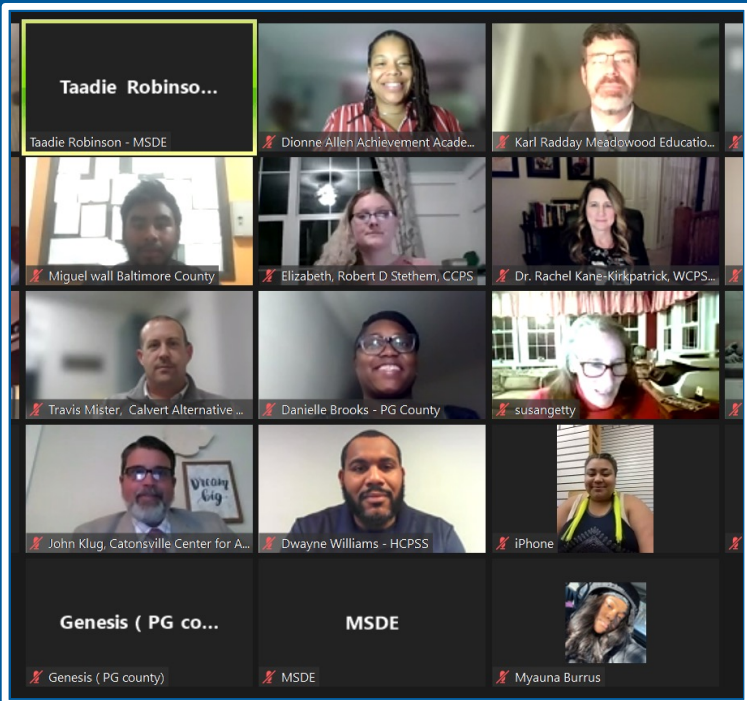
Community Conversations

Community conversations were developed as a mechanism for the State Superintendent to directly engage with specific communities, especially historically underserved groups. Similar to the roundtables, community conversations featured a small group of stakeholders in a discussion.

Topics and questions were developed in collaboration between community leaders, community organizations, and Maryland State Department of Education staff. Community conversations were held in-person and virtually.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION Key Takeaways

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Students mentioned that **one of the ways alternative education programs help them thrive is by providing smaller classroom sizes** and one-on-one teacher support. They also identified barriers to their education such as transportation.

When asked what strategies had the most impact on student outcomes, **school leaders said that creating relationships and providing opportunities for students to experience college or careers had the greatest success**.

Community Events

Events included presenting the strategic planning process to community organizations, advisory councils, and school district, family, and stakeholder event attendees.

Student Shadows

State Superintendent Choudhury has **visited all of Maryland's local education agencies multiple times - 23 counties and Baltimore City - to engage with students, staff, principals, and local superintendents** throughout the state.

Visits consisted of shadowing a student during classes, school programs, lunch, and even recess! During these fully-immersive experiences, the State Superintendent actively participated in classwork, physical education, and student-led meetings.

These shadows also encompassed the shadow of a school principal and local education agency superintendent.

288

Hours Spent Shadowing Students, Principals and Superintendents

48

Student Shadows

20

Principal Shadows

47

Superintendent Shadows

State Superintendent of Schools School Visits 2021-Present

A	Allegany County	M	Harford County
B	Anne Arundel County	N	Howard County
C	Baltimore County	O	Kent County
D	Baltimore City	P	Montgomery County
E	Calvert County	Q	Prince George's County
F	Caroline County	R	Queen Anne's County
G	Carroll County	S	St. Mary's County
H	Cecil County	T	Somerset County
I	Charles County	U	Talbot County
J	Dorchester County	V	Washington County
K	Frederick County	W	Wicomico County
L	Garrett County	X	Worcester County

● = VISITED
● = MULTIPLE VISITS

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

STUDENT SHADOWS - Key Takeaways
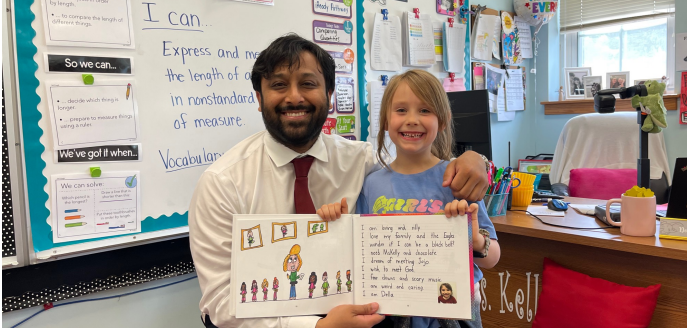
ALLEGANY COUNTY

State Superintendent Choudhury shadowed 1st grader Della at Cresaptown Elementary School. Together, they participated in math class where students learned how to measure the length of an object using nonstandard units of measure. Della and her classmates completed an activity using paperclips and unit cubes to measure and find the length of common objects like carrots and markers. Mr. Choudhury ended the day by shadowing Superintendent Mr. Blank at the central office.

HOWARD COUNTY

State Superintendent Choudhury shadowed 5th grader Olivia at Manor Woods Elementary School. As a Chinese, Spanish and American s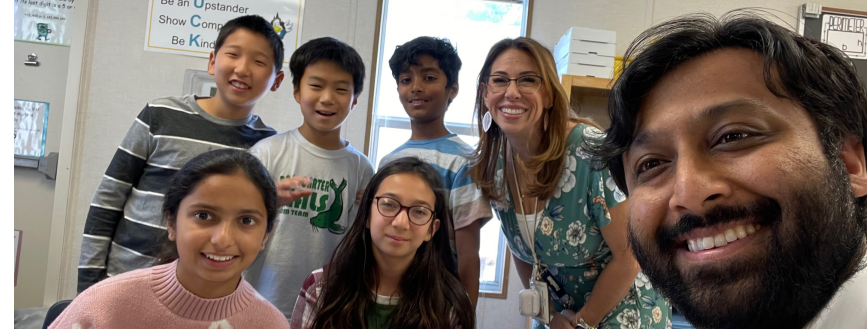tudent, Olivia has integrated her culture into her daily interactions. Olivia began the day in orchestra where they played a rendition of "We Are the Champions" by Queen. After orchestra was ELA where the class was analyzing Shel Silverstein's "Where the Sidewalk Ends." Next up was math class where students traveled around the classroom to complete problems, including finding the degrees of angles, ratios, and more. Mr. Choudhury then made his way to Longfellow Elementary School where he shadowed Principal Anderson. Afterward, he shadowed Superintendent Martirano at the central office.

WICOMICO COUNTY

State Superintendent Choudhury shadowed Cayson, a 2nd-grade Beaver Run Elementary School student. Their morning of learning was filled with phonics lessons, sentence-building puzzles, and a class read-aloud of "Monkey and Rabbit." During Music class, students engaged in festive singing and dancing. Next, he shadowed Wicomico County Superintendent Dr. Micah Stauffer at Junior Achievement of the Eastern Shore. Their mission is to inspire and prepare youth to succeed with learning focused on financial literacy, workforce, and entrepreneurship.

Regional Data Walks

These presentations provided an opportunity for local education leaders to learn about the strategic planning process, discuss and analyze regional data trends, and provide feedback on what they deemed necessary to implement the priorities and enablers.

Regions:

- Southern
- Western
- Eastern Shore
- Core North
- Core South

REGIONAL DATA WALKS
Key Takeaways

Staffing was a topic that was frequently mentioned, particularly **financial incentives**, staffing challenges, and a need for certain types of staff. Participants pushed for an increase in salaries, as well as **multiple pathways to teacher certification.**

Respondents felt **students need more time and support in figuring out their career path**. Concerns were raised about barriers to dual enrollment, particularly for students of color.

Many respondents reported that they gained insights from the data walk about their local education agency (LEA) and other LEAs. Participants were interested in **connecting with other LEAs and learning strategies** and ideas from each other.

Strategic Planning Charettes

Regional charettes were used to develop, refine, and finalize the flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies related to the priorities and enablers. These events provided a forum for stakeholders to engage in creative discussion and provide immediate feedback on ideas presented. More importantly, the charettes enabled participants to become mutual authors of the plan.
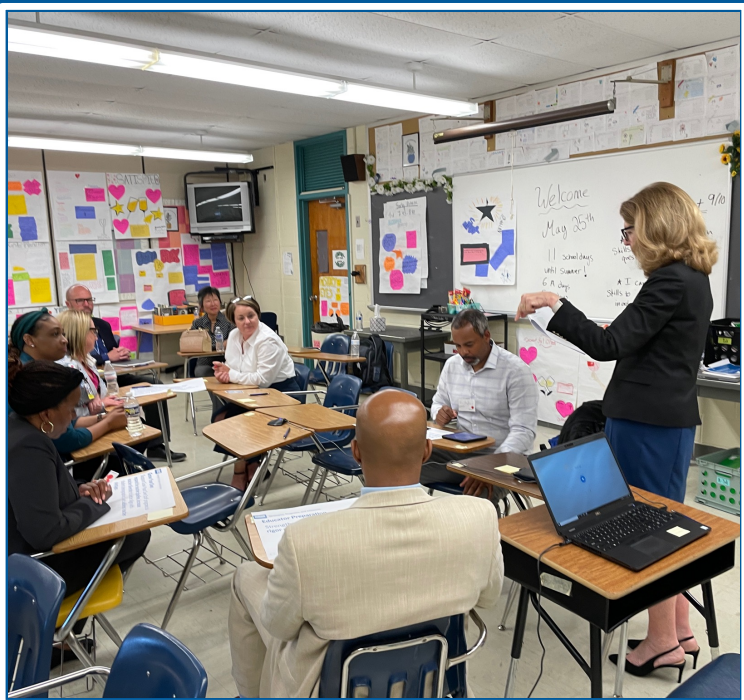
CHARETTES
Key Takeaways

When discussing early learning, participants stressed the importance of providing **access to early childhood education for all children**, with a focus on the period between birth and age three.

When talking about literacy instruction, the conversation focused on the conditions needed for successful implementation of **evidence-based reading programs**, including **comprehensive training for teachers**, consistent **strategies across subject areas**, adequate **high-quality resources** and support, and a balance between **assessments and instructional time**.

CHARETTES Key Takeaways (Cont.)

When asked about the middle grades, stakeholders emphasized the need to address learning gaps and **counter disengagement by restructuring students' schedules** to incorporate intervention blocks, implementing a system for **early identification of academic, behavioral, and attendance challenges**, providing resources and support for educators to understand adolescent needs, offering **planning time and staffing** dependent on school and community needs.

CHARETTES Key Takeaways (Cont.)

When looking at College and Career Readiness, participants stressed the need for **early intervention systems**, addressing **mental health resources**, and ensuring follow-through with resources post-pandemic, as well as **providing teachers with adequate preparation** for the evolving educational landscape while involving families in **curriculum selection**.

In relation to the educator workforce, participants highlighted the challenges in **forming and maintaining partnerships** with higher education institutions. They discussed barriers in **educator preparation programs and suggested alternative pathways to certification**. There was also an interest in **revamping resident teacher programs and implementing strategies to increase the teacher and school leader pipelines**, as well as providing new teachers with mentoring opportunities.

Strategic Plan Elements

Introducing the mission, vision, values, priorities, enablers, goals, and metrics, as well as flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies.

Mission and Vision

OUR MISSION

We will ensure a rigorous and world-class educational experience for every Maryland student, in every neighborhood, that prepares each to be college and career ready, through:

- strategic direction and leadership;
- policy making and resource allocation; and
- engagement and advocacy.

OUR VISION

We will be a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and life.

VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY - We will take responsibility for our commitments, and maintain open, transparent, and responsive communication on academic, operational, and financial policies and outcomes.

ENGAGEMENT - We will partner and engage with diverse stakeholders and decision makers in the design, implementation, and evaluation of our policies, programs, and actions.

EQUITY - We will do whatever it takes to eliminate barriers to success and provide the necessary resources and supports to ensure that every Maryland student achieves at the highest level.

EXCELLENCE - We will ensure a rigorous and engaging educational environment for all students defined by high expectations, research-based instructional practices, and highly-effective, culturally responsive educators.

TRANSFORMATION - We will pursue best-in-class outcomes through bold, impactful actions to ensure that every student has the tools, resources, supports, and opportunities they need to thrive.

PRIORITIES

The Strategic Plan priorities **encapsulate the comprehensive stakeholder feedback** received through multiple methods.

Organized into a coherent sequence, the **priorities trace the full journey and key milestones** that a Maryland student needs to achieve from early childhood through grade 12 to become successful in college, career, and life.

PRIORITY 1

PRIORITY 2

PRIORITY 3

PRIORITY 4

PRIORITIES

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

All Maryland students are prepared socially, emotionally, and academically for success in kindergarten.

READY TO READ

All Maryland students are proficient in reading by the end of third grade, and those who are not have the necessary supports to become proficient.

READY FOR HIGH SCHOOL

All Maryland students enter high school on track to meet the college and career readiness standard by the end of 10th grade, and are engaged socially, emotionally, and academically to succeed in progressively challenging and advanced level coursework aligned to college and career pathways.

READY FOR COLLEGE & CAREER

All Maryland students graduate from high school college and career ready, and with an individualized plan to succeed in college, career, and life.

ENABLERS

The enablers detail the **necessary structural conditions that need to be met** for every student in the state to support them in successfully reaching their full potential.

1 Maryland is supporting our schools, local education agencies, families, and decision makers by producing relevant, timely, and high-quality data and reporting, and enabling educators to make the best use of their resources to meet the needs of our students and accelerate student achievement.

2 Maryland's classrooms challenge, support, and inspire students. Therefore, our schools will be equipped with high-quality curricula, lessons, assessments, and systems for intervention and acceleration.

3 Maryland is elevating the stature of the teaching profession by:
- intentionally working to attract, recruit, and retain a highly qualified and diverse workforce;
- setting rigorous standards for educator preparation programs and induction; and
- implementing a career ladder system focused on development and growth opportunities for all educators.

4 Maryland is ensuring student success by:
- supporting our students' social-emotional learning, health and wellness, and safety;
- enhancing school culture and climate;
- scaling high-quality wraparound supports and partnerships; and
- strengthening family and community engagement.

GOALS & METRICS

The Strategic Plan goals outlined in this section were established to **define and monitor the success of each priority and enabler**. The metrics, or the data source and data subsets, create a narrow lens used to evaluate the trajectory of each goal and establish baseline measures.

P1

Increase in percentage of kindergarten students scoring at the Demonstrating Readiness level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).

P2

Increase in percentage of grade 3 students scoring at or above Proficient on the Grade 3 English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.

P3

Decrease in percentage of grade 8 students that met one or more of the following ABC indicators:

Attendance: student was chronically absent in grade 6, 7, or 8

Behavior: student received one or more out-of-school suspensions in grades 6-8

Courses: student failed one or more ELA or math courses in grades 6-8

P4

Increase in percentage of high school graduates who met the state College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard and completed a CCR pathway.

GOALS & METRICS

As we continue to rebuild, the goals and metrics will help us keep a pulse on our progress and ultimately inform the flagship strategies and programs to be implemented to accelerate student achievement.

E1 Relevant data reports and high-quality tools that are made available to families, educators, and stakeholders to meet the needs of students.

E2 Increase in percentage of schools visited by Expert Review Teams that are rated as "Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement" in the "Curriculum and Instruction" and the "Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports" indicators.

E3 Increase in percentage of new teachers of color as measured by the Fall Staff Collection report; increase in percentage of teachers retained over a 3-year period; and increase in percentage of teachers eligible for the Teacher Leadership Track of the career ladder.

E4 Increase in percentage of schools perceived as having a favorable learning environment* and decrease in suspension rate.

*Specific survey topics will be selected when a third year of survey data is available in late 2023

GOALS & METRICS

When looking at the data, we will disaggregate by: student groups, race/ethnicity, gender, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, English learners, schools, and local education agencies.

GOALS & METRICS FOR LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Decrease in the percentage of schools that are re-identified as low performing schools three (3) school years after initial identification.
Of a cohort of low-performing schools, increase in average performance level in MCAP ELA and math, and decrease in chronic absenteeism rates.

GOALS & METRICS FOR A COHORT OF STUDENTS

Following a cohort of students from grade 3 to 8, increase in average performance level in ELA and math on MCAP. To follow the same students over time, the outcome will be recalculated for prior years as students in the cohort move out of the state.

PRIORITY

All Maryland students are prepared socially, emotionally, and academically for success in kindergarten.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of kindergarten students scoring at the Demonstrating Readiness level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

WHEN SURVEYED	DURING ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS	IN THE LISTENING SESSIONS
Nearly 1/3 of respondents chose social, emotional, and mental health supports as their top priority.	Participants advocated for greater investment in teacher training at the early childhood level as well as focusing on retaining quality teachers.	Participants welcomed the resources made available by the Blueprint for broadening the availability and expanding access to Pre-K and early childhood programs.

PRIORITY 1: READY FOR KINDERGARTEN STRATEGIES

- Provide increased access to early childhood programs through a Mixed-Delivery System comprised of private and public providers and ensure affordability by subsidizing the cost for families.

- Expand early learning hubs, such as Judy and Patty Centers, that utilize a Two-Generation Approach to ensure families are supported in the development of their children ages 0-5.

- Develop Early Learning Standards that implement age-appropriate learning practices and materials, and foster high-quality learning environments for children's social, emotional, and academic growth.

- Utilize Maryland's Comprehensive Early Childhood Assessment System to monitor readiness and measure the quality of early learning programs to ensure culturally responsive, academically and developmentally appropriate materials and resources are provided to support and empower educators to be successful.

During the Ready for Kindergarten Charette, participants ranked their top three strategies for what they thought would be the most effective. Stakeholders selected a Mixed-Delivery System as their top strategy.

MIXED-DELIVERY SYSTEM

A Mixed-Delivery System is a model that co-delivers high-quality Pre-K in both private provider- and school-based settings through partnerships with child care centers, family child care providers, Head Start, faith-based providers, private schools, public charter schools, college/university early learning centers.

PRE-K ACCESSIBILITY & AFFORDABILITY

EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

MARYLAND EXCELS

EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSESSMENTS

TWO-GENERATION APPROACH & EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING HUBS

HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

PRIORITY

All Maryland students are proficient in reading by the end of third grade, and those who are not have the necessary supports to become proficient.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of grade 3 students scoring at or above Proficient on the Grade 3 English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

49% SELECTED READING & WRITING IN THE EARLY GRADES AS THEIR TOP PRIORITY

When polled, 49% of survey respondents selected Reading & Writing in the Early Grades as their top priority. This priority remains at the top of the list when comparing results by stakeholder group and by region. That is also the case when we break down the results by race/ethnicity, with the only exception of Asian respondents, for whom this priority is the second most frequently selected, very closely after math and science skills.

PRIORITY 2: READY TO READ STRATEGIES

- Training and coaching on evidence-based and highly-effective reading pedagogy provided to all Pre-K through 3rd grade teachers, including special education teachers, principals, and other relevant staff aligned to the Science of Reading.

- Ensure the adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) that are content-rich and culturally responsive, as well as assessment tools aligned to the Science of Reading.

- Create and implement systems for progress monitoring* to ensure all students are reading by the end of third grade and have the appropriate supports if still struggling with reading beyond third grade.

*This includes the use of Universal Screeners as required by Maryland's Ready to Read Act.

During the Ready to Read Charette, participants ranked their top three strategies for what they thought would be the most effective. Stakeholders selected a Training and Coaching for Educators as their top strategy.

TRAINING & COACHING FOR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, AND OTHER STAFF

Comprehensive professional development equips educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement evidence-based practices. Coaching provides ongoing support, allowing educators to refine their instructional techniques and receive personalized feedback. By providing training and coaching aligned with the Science of Reading, schools foster a culture of continuous improvement and equip teachers with the tools they need to deliver effective reading instruction to every student.

HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & ASSESSMENT TOOLS

EVIDENCE-BASED PEDAGOGY: SCIENCE OF READING

Strategic Plan Elements

PRIORITY

All Maryland students enter high school on track to meet the college and career readiness standard by the end of 10th grade, and are engaged socially, emotionally, and academically to succeed in progressively challenging and advanced level coursework aligned to college and career pathways.

GOALS & METRICS

Decrease in percentage of grade 8 students that met one or more of the following ABC indicators:
- Attendance: student was chronically absent in grade 6, 7, or 8
- Behavior: student received one or more out-of-school suspensions in grades 6-8
- Courses: student failed one or more ELA or math courses in grades 6-8

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

WHEN SURVEYED	DURING ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS	IN THE LISTENING SESSIONS
When looking at the overall results, nearly a third of survey respondents selected Supports for Social, Emotional, and Mental Health as a priority.	Students felt that exposure to a wide number of extracurriculars and "niche" classes in middle school would help them balance their interests.	The Blueprint strategies that generated most interest among participants were those related to College and Career Readiness, especially beginning in the earlier grades.

PRIORITY 3: READY FOR HIGH SCHOOL STRATEGIES

With an Early Warning System (EWS), the state will provide tools for local education agencies to identify students who are at risk of not being college and career ready to get back on track. By utilizing indicators such as attendance, behavior, and course grades, educators do not have to wait for students to fail to know they are at risk.

- Provide teachers and staff access to an integrated data system that updates regularly with students' indicators across academics, behavior, attendance, and social emotional learning.

- Create a multi tiered response system focused on addressing the needs of all students, a group of students, and individual student interventions.

- Monitor and modify interventions that are not working, and scale those which are successful.

In addition to EWS, implementing the following best practices will leverage the developmental opportunities of early adolescence in the middle grades:

- Adopt flexible scheduling strategies such as block scheduling to support the academic and developmental needs of students and include common planning time for teachers to plan instruction collaboratively.

- Ensure that classroom organization and staffing patterns support the needs of students through interdisciplinary teaching, or team teaching, to improve the academic and social emotional outcomes for middle school students.

- Provide access to enrichment and elective courses to support student engagement, and schedule advisory periods to support student connectedness.

During the Ready for High School Charette, participants ranked their top three strategies for what they thought would be the most effective. Stakeholders selected Flexible Scheduling and Strategic Staffing as their top strategy.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING & STRATEGIC STAFFING

Flexible scheduling, such as block scheduling, allows for more instructional time, enabling teachers to delve deeper into content and engage students. It provides opportunities for differentiated instruction, interventions, and enrichment activities specific to individual student needs. Incorporating common planning time and interdisciplinary teaching allows educators to share best practices, align instructional strategies, and develop cohesive curricula creating a supportive environment and strengthening the professional growth of teachers.

EXPANSION OF ENRICHMENT & ELECTIVE COURSES

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS & SYSTEMS

PRIORITY

All Maryland students graduate from high school college and career ready, and with an individualized plan to succeed in college, career, and life.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of high school graduates who met the state College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard and completed a CCR pathway.

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

WHEN SURVEYED	DURING ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS	IN THE LISTENING SESSIONS
Teachers and business leaders selected Expanding CTE Programs among the top five most frequently selected priorities.	Participants advocated for greater investment in career counseling and for an expansion of college and career courses to better prepare all students for postsecondary success.	Participants envisioned a seamless transition for students from career exploration to preparation and training, and from credentialing to hiring and career success.

PRIORITY 4: READY FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER STRATEGIES

- Set a new evidence-based College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard that moves beyond standardized tests, and ensure equitable access to post-CCR pathways.

- Ensure the adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) across every school, including the necessary training required for successful implementation.

- Adopt an Early Warning System (EWS) tied to high-quality and timely interventions, including strengthening the implementation of Maryland's 9th Grade On-Track measure across local education agencies.

- Build and sustain an infrastructure for High-Quality, School Day Tutoring across Maryland, including the use of flexible scheduling strategies such as block scheduling to support the academic and developmental needs of students.

During the Ready for College and Career Charette, participants ranked their top three strategies for what they thought would be the most effective. Stakeholders selected a College and Career Readiness Standard as their top strategy.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARD

Student achievement, graduation rate, and postsecondary enrollment data for Maryland students, especially for underserved student populations, signal the need to rethink how we prepare our students to succeed in and through college and in their careers. MSDE commissioned two research studies to determine the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in an entry-level college course. Both studies explore alternative methods of demonstrating readiness, such as GPA and course completion.

Currently, a student meets the interim College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard if they meet or exceed the standards in both English and math. Through our engagement, we identified guiding principles for the implementation of a new CCR system grounded in moving beyond using standardized test scores as the only measure of readiness, equitable access to post-CCR pathways, and pathways that enable students to explore elective enrichment and academic opportunities.

POST-CCR PATHWAYS & CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS: 9TH GRADE ON-TRACK MEASURES

HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

HIGH-QUALITY, SCHOOL DAY TUTORING

ENABLER

Maryland is supporting our schools, local education agencies, families, and decision makers by producing relevant, timely, and high-quality data and reporting, and enabling educators to make the best use of their resources to meet the needs of our students and accelerate student achievement.

GOALS & METRICS

Relevant data reports and high-quality tools that are made available to families, educators, and stakeholders to meet the needs of students.

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

DURING THE LEARNING LABS MORE THAN 78% OF ATTENDEES REPORTED BEING "HIGHLY SATISFIED" WITH THE EVENT

On average, more than 78% of attendees reported being "highly satisfied" with the Early Literacy Learning Labs, while the remaining 22% reported being "satisfied" with the event. Overall, respondents found the event to be well-organized and informative, and they appreciated the intentional sequence of activities and selection of presenters. Participants found the opportunity to visit classrooms and observe instruction to be highly meaningful and beneficial.

ENABLER 1: HIGH-QUALITY DATA & REPORTING AND RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS STRATEGIES

- Provide ongoing professional learning series focused on evidence-based pedagogy and ensuring meaningful use of assessments and other data to drive effective instructional practices (e.g. Learning Labs, Lesson Studies, etc.).

- Evolve Maryland's school Accountability System to align with Blueprint outcomes and prioritize student growth as a primary indicator of school quality and enhance reporting features.

- Enhance and scale tools that enable effective local education agencies' operations and teaching and learning practices at both the district and school level (e.g. School Accountability Projection Tools).

- Develop a new Statewide Finance and Data System to accurately measure and enforce accountability, collect and report new data, and advance public transparency and understanding of how State Aid calculations work.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: LEARNING LABS

Learning labs provide an innovative approach for teachers and administrators to engage in collaborative learning and planning using Maryland schools and districts as labs. These labs offer a supportive environment where educators can experiment, reflect, and refine their instructional practices based on the specific needs and challenges of their schools. This unique format provides educators with opportunities to learn from their peers as well as subject-matter experts while focusing on a specific topic anchored around essential and guiding questions – learning from real-world contexts and gaining valuable insights into effective strategies and solutions.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING TOOLS

STATEWIDE FINANCE AND DATA SYSTEM

ENABLER

Maryland's classrooms challenge, support, and inspire students. Therefore, our schools will be equipped with high-quality curricula, lessons, assessments, and systems for intervention and acceleration.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of schools visited by Expert Review Teams that are rated as "Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement" in the "Curriculum and Instruction" and the "Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports" indicators.

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

DURING ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

In-depth dialogues fostered by roundtables highlighted meaningful nuances in the views and aspirations of Marylanders across our state. Black/African American respondents emphasized resources such as access to advanced coursework and pathways, and high-quality teachers for underserved communities in their most frequently cited priorities.

ENABLER 2: HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULA & SYSTEMS FOR INTERVENTION AND ACCELERATION STRATEGIES

Ensure the adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) that are content-rich and culturally responsive, as well as assessment tools aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

Establish and adopt a statewide Early Warning System (EWS) across the prekindergarten through 12th grade spectrum to identify students who are at risk of:

- Not being ready for kindergarten

- Not being ready to read by the end of third grade

- Not being proficient in math by the end of fifth grade

- Not being ready for high school (e.g. attendance, behavior, and course grades in middle school)

- Not being on track to graduate from high school in four years

- Not being college and career ready by the end of tenth grade

HIGH-QUALITY
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

High-Quality Instructional Materials play a crucial role in supporting effective teaching and improving student outcomes. These materials, which are aligned with standards and research-based practices, provide educators with the necessary resources to deliver rigorous and engaging instruction. Many states across the nation have recognized the significance of these materials and are taking steps to facilitate their adoption by developing policies and initiatives that support the selection, adoption, and effective implementation of these materials.

STATEWIDE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (EWS) ACROSS THE PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12TH GRADE

ENABLER

Maryland is elevating the stature of the teaching profession by: intentionally working to attract, recruit, and retain a highly qualified and diverse workforce; setting rigorous standards for educator preparation programs and induction; and implementing a career ladder system focused on development and growth opportunities for all educators.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of new teachers of color as measured by the Fall Staff Collection report; increase in percentage of teachers retained over a 3-year period; and increase in percentage of teachers eligible for the Teacher Leadership Track of the career ladder.

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

DURING THE EDUCATOR DIVERSITY & EARLY CAREER AND RISING EDUCATORS ROUNDTABLES

Teachers of color cited their own early experiences with lack of representation as having a profound impact on their decision to become a teacher & stay in the profession. Another major obstacle for increasing the number of teachers of color, according to participants, was the steep cost of becoming a teacher, suggesting the need for financial assistance in the form of tuition reimbursement, paid internships, and/or stipends for student teachers.
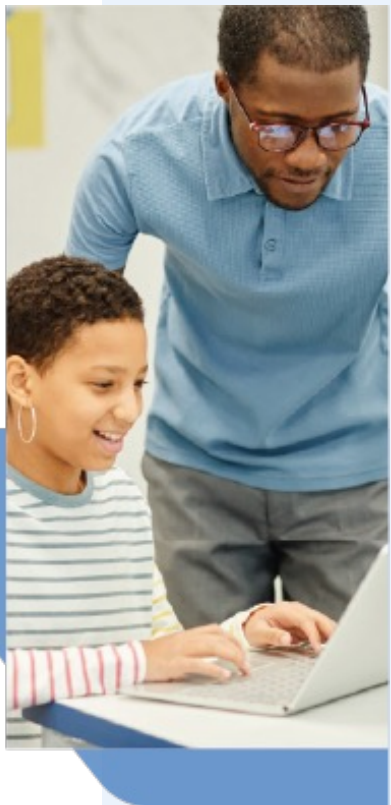
ENABLER 3: ELEVATING THE TEACHING PROFESSION STRATEGIES

- Strengthen regulations to increase the rigor of educator preparation programs.

- Support Grow Your Own staff programs to expand teacher and school leader pipelines, increase diversity to better align with student demographics, and address educator shortages.

- Develop guidelines for comprehensive educator Induction Programs for new teachers and school leaders to provide quality mentoring and support to ease the transition into the classroom.

- Implement teacher and school leader Career Ladders that expand opportunities for growth and collaboration, as well as increase compensation to attract and retain a high-quality and diverse educator workforce and to incentivize educators to work in low-performing schools.

GROW YOUR OWN (GYO) STAFF: EXPANDING THE TEACHER & SCHOOL LEADER PIPELINE

Grow Your Own programs are strategies and partnerships between educator preparation programs, school district, and community organizations that recruit and prepare local community members to enter the teaching profession and lead in their communities. They are designed to expand teacher and school leader pipelines, address shortages, and increase diversity to better align with student demographics.

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAMS

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREER LADDERS

ENABLER

Maryland is ensuring student success by: supporting our students' social-emotional learning, health and wellness, and safety; enhancing school culture and climate; scaling high-quality wraparound supports and partnerships; and strengthening family and community engagement.

GOALS & METRICS

Increase in percentage of schools perceived as having a favorable learning environment* and decrease in suspension rate.

Specific survey topics will be selected when a third year of survey data is available in late 2023

SNAPSHOT OF ENGAGEMENT

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS MENTIONED THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THEIR CHILDREN'S ABILITY TO LEARN, THEIR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING, AND THEIR SENSE OF CONNECTION

Participants reflected on how the pandemic had laid bare long-standing unmet needs and profound deficits in services for students and their families, from food insecurity to uneven access to reliable internet to a chronic shortage of mental health services. The pandemic heightened these needs and created more urgency for finding solutions. Participants called for greater availability of counselors in school buildings and for better education for both parents/guardians and students regarding mental health and emotional wellbeing.

ENABLER 4: SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS SOCIALLY & EMOTIONALLY STRATEGIES

- Expand community schools and provide professional learning for community school coordinators and staff rooted in the Collective Impact framework to provide effective wraparound services that meet the needs of students and the community.

- Scale the Maryland School Mental Health Response Program to support local education agencies in addressing student and family mental health needs by enriching and enhancing the work of site-based student support services personnel utilizing a consultancy approach.

- Utilize results from the Maryland School Survey to spotlight connections between student and educator perceptions of their schools and school achievement and other outcomes, while driving school level practices for improvement of student outcomes.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

This evidence-based strategy focuses on four pillars: integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices. Community schools promote positive, equitable outcomes by providing students and families with the physical and mental health, academic, and extracurricular supports needed to thrive.

Under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, any school that receives Concentration of Poverty Grants must implement the community school model. Concentration of Poverty Grants provide schools with startup funding and permanent per-pupil dollars to launch and sustain community schools. The grants are formula-based and awarded to schools on an annual basis. As of fiscal year 2023, there are 358 community schools receiving Concentration of Poverty Grants.
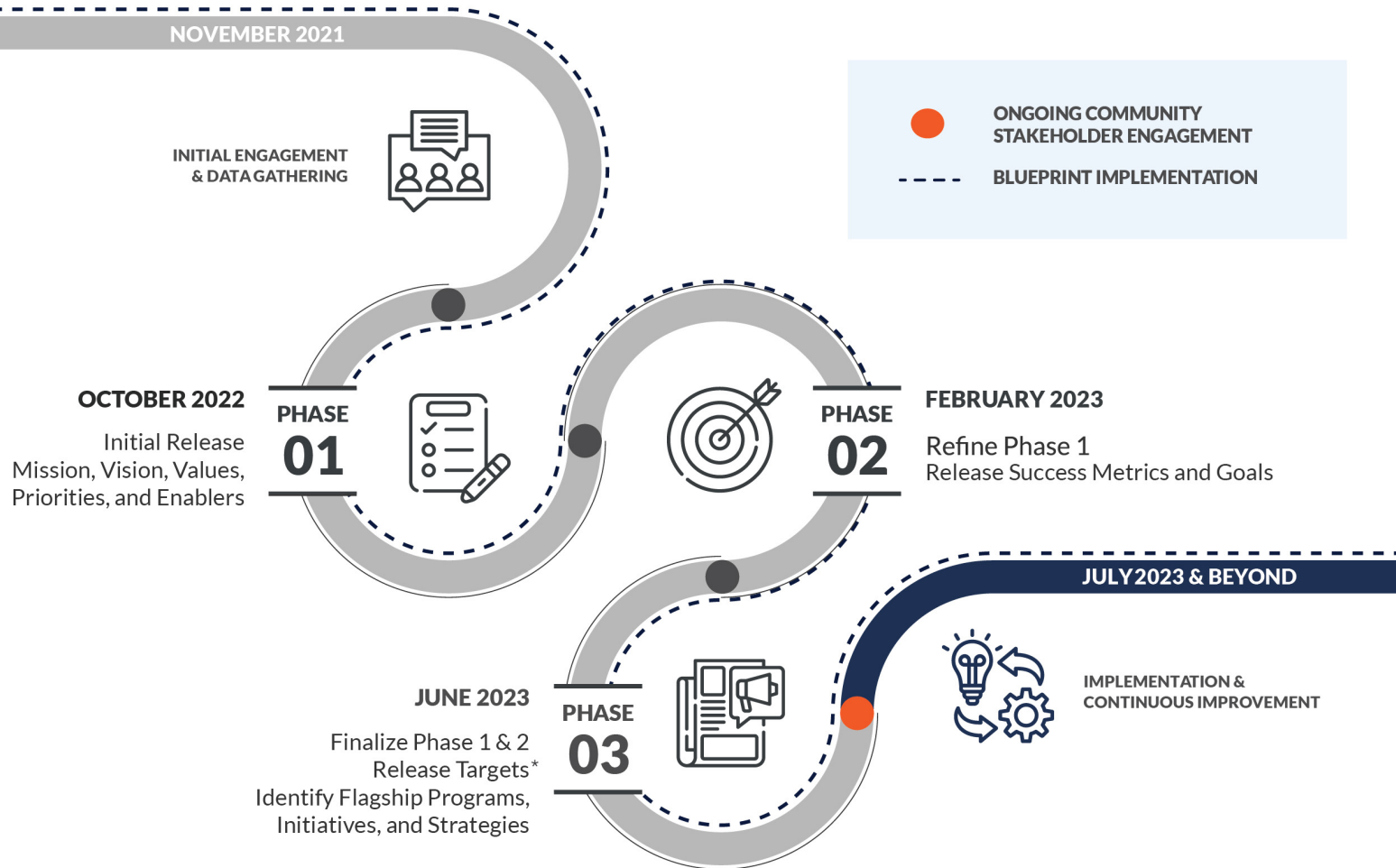
MARYLAND SCHOOL SURVEY

MARYLAND SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE PROGRAM

What's Next?

Translating plan elements into actionable steps through clear communication, strong leadership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

Strategic Plan – Implementation & Continuous Improvement

NOVEMBER 2021

INITIAL ENGAGEMENT & DATA GATHERING

● ONGOING COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- - - - BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION

OCTOBER 2022

Initial Release
Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities, and Enablers

PHASE
01

PHASE
02

FEBRUARY 2023

Refine Phase 1
Release Success Metrics and Goals

JUNE 2023

Finalize Phase 1 & 2
Release Targets*
Identify Flagship Programs, Initiatives, and Strategies

PHASE
03

JULY 2023 & BEYOND

IMPLEMENTATION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The implementation process of the Strategic Plan **transforms the elements outlined in the plan into actionable steps.**

Effective implementation requires clear communication, strong leadership, and continued engagement of stakeholders. Regular monitoring and evaluation of progress are crucial to identify any gaps or challenges in the implementation process. **The continuous improvement process ensures that the plan remains relevant and effective over time.** Through a cycle of implementation, evaluation, and improvement, we can ensure that the Strategic Plan remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with evolving needs.

Final targets will be set by late Fall 2023 using the Spring 2023 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program results

Download the Strategic Plan & Engagement Report

The finalized versions of the Maryland State Board & Department of Education's Strategic Plan Guidebook and Engagement Report are available to view and/or download online at:

strategicplan.marylandpublicschools.org