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**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education

**FROM:** Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools 

**DATE:** May 21, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Recognition of the 2023 Milken Educator Award Recipients

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### **Purpose**

The State Board of Education, along with State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carey M. Wright, will honor Bradley Absher and Maggie Arnold, recipients of the 2023 Maryland Milken Educator Award.

### **Background**

The Milken Educator Awards, created by Lowell Milken in 1987, have rewarded and inspired excellence in the world of education by honoring top educators around the country with \$25,000 unrestricted awards. The Milken Educator Awards target early-to-mid career education professionals for their already impressive achievements and, more significantly, for the promise of what they will accomplish in the future.

### **Executive Summary**

Bradley Absher, a fifth-grade mathematics teacher at Bodkin Elementary School in Anne Arundel County, extends leadership beyond the classroom walls. He mentors not only his own students but offers after-school tutoring and unwavering support to students throughout the school. Absher is actively involved in the school's extracurricular activities and leads various clubs including STEM, SeaPerch, Math Mindset and both the board game and chess clubs. With a commitment to professional growth and personal excellence, Absher participates in the PTA, volunteers at the environmental fair and math nights, leads the math action team, serves on the school improvement and leadership teams, supervises high school interns and student teachers, and leads the process for the county's Academic Achievement for All (AAA) math grant. He will be accompanied by Anne Arundel County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Mark Bedell and Bodkin Elementary School Principal Bonnie Myers.

Maggie Arnold teaches ninth to twelfth grade mathematics at Frederick High School in Frederick County. Maggie's approach to educating the "whole child" is rooted in Mind Brain Education (MBE), involving the connection among meditation, mindfulness, and metacognition. As such, her classroom is a collaborative hub for higher-order thinking, questioning, feedback, and problem-solving where students develop a tenacity to reach their potential. One prime example is her financial literacy assignment "Passport to Financial Independence" developed by ChooseFI. This long-term project prepares students for the realities of the workforce by earning passport stamps – like those accumulated during real-life travel – for engaging in sound financial practices like contributing to a savings account, shadowing a professional or performing a "shop

comparison” on a purchase. Additionally, Arnold helps her students excel through ALEKS – a personalized learning pathway system. She will be accompanied by Dr. Kevin Cuppett, Frederick County Public Schools Chief of Curriculum Instruction & Innovation; and Frederick High School Principal David Franceschina.

**Action**

No action is required; this information is for discussion only.