

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Schools

TO:	Members of the State Board of Education
FROM:	Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools
DATE:	January 28, 2025
SUBJECT:	COMAR 13A.12.02.03 Pathways to Teacher Licensure PERMISSION TO ADOPT

Executive Summary

The purpose of this item is to request permission to adopt amendments to the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.12.02.03 *Pathways to Teacher Licensure* to align the requirements to amendments made to Maryland statute during the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is amending COMAR 13A.12.02.03 Pathways to Teacher Licensure to align with the language in Md., Code Education §6-120, §6-125, and §6-126, which were modified during the 2023 and 2024 Maryland Legislative Sessions.

Background and Process

Under Maryland law, the State Board of Education (SBOE) shares joint authority with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) to develop regulations governing teacher certification and preparation. When the PSTEB initiates a regulatory change, the SBOE must also review the proposed regulation, and vice versa. If a majority of the SBOE members approve of the regulation, the regulation promulgation process continues.

After the PSTEB and SBOE vote to approve a regulation, the proposed regulation is sent to the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee (AELR) for a 15-day review period. If the AELR Committee does not hold up the proposed regulation for further review, it is published in the Maryland Register for a 30-day public comment period. At the end of the comment period, MSDE staff reviews and summarizes the public comments, which are presented to both boards. Thereafter, MSDE staff will present a recommendation to both the PSTEB and SBOE to either: (1) adopt the regulation in the form it was proposed; or (2) revise the regulation and adopt it as final because the suggested revision is not a substantive change; or (3) withdraw the regulation and re-propose it because the suggested revision is a substantive change. At any time during this process, the AELR Committee may stop the promulgation process and hold a hearing. Thereafter, it may recommend to the Governor that the regulation not be adopted as a final regulation or the AELR Committee may release the regulation for final adoption. The PSTEB and SBOE would then vote to formally adopt the regulation.

The PSTEB and SBOE adopted new program approval regulations in November and December 2023, respectively. Since its adoption, the MSDE has identified areas in the regulations that require further alignment to newly adopted laws.

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The purpose of the proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.03 is to align regulatory language with statutory language adopted during the previous two legislative sessions. For this reason, the MSDE is not recommending substantive changes to the regulations. Should the PSTEB or SBOE wish to promulgate amendments to add pathways to licensure, MSDE recommends doing so through a separate promulgation.

PSTEB passed a motion to adopt amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.03 *Pathways to Teacher Licensure* on December 5, 2024.

Action Required

The MSDE is requesting permission to adopt amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.03 *Pathways to Teacher Licensure*.

Attachments

Public Comment

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Title 13A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure

Authority: Education Article, §§2-205, 2-303(g), 6-701-6-708, 8-3A-03 and 8-701-8-708, Annotated Code of Maryland

13A.12.02.03 Pathways to Teacher Licensure

.03 Pathways to Teacher Licensure.

A. In-State Pathways to Initial Teacher Licenses.

(1) Maryland Approved Program. Teacher candidates who complete a Maryland approved educator preparation program as set forth in COMAR 13A.07.06 shall meet the following requirements:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Documentation of one of the following:

(i) Passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a basic literacy skills assessment as approved by the State Board of Education;

(ii) Minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on the most recently earned degree; or (iii) Three years of effective evaluations from a local school system in Maryland;

[c](d)—[d](e) (text unchanged)

[e] (f) Beginning on July 1, 2025, [passing scores as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a portfoliobased performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education.] *meet one of the following qualifications:*

(i) Passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a nationally recognized, portfolio-based performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education; or

(ii) Completion of a comprehensive local school system teacher induction program that meets the requirements listed under $\S C(2)$ of this regulation.

(2) In-District Training Program. Teacher candidates who are hired as a teacher of record in a Maryland local school [district] *system* may complete a Department-approved in-district training program. Candidates seeking licensure under the indistrict pathway shall meet the following requirements:

(a) (text unchanged)

(b) Demonstration of content knowledge by completing the following:

(i)—(ii) (text unchanged)

(iii) [Passing] *Bachelor's degree or higher in any field and passing* scores as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a content licensure test approved by the State Board of Education.

(c)—(f) (text unchanged)

(3) Experienced Nonpublic School Teacher. Experienced teacher candidates working in Maryland nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.09 shall meet the following requirements:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Beginning on July 1, 2025, [passing scores as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a portfolio-based performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and] *meet one of the following qualifications*:

(i) Passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a nationally recognized, portfolio-based performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education;

(ii) An effective, or comparable, rating on a year-end evaluation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system, State-operated school, or approved nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10;

(iii) Complete a comprehensive induction program under § C(2) of this regulation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system; or

(iv) Hold a National Board Certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and (d) (text unchanged)

B. Out-of-State Pathways to Initial Teacher License.

(1) Out-of-State Teacher Preparation Program. Teacher candidates who complete a teacher preparation program in another state or foreign country shall meet the following requirements:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Beginning on July 1, 2025, [a passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a portfoliobased performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and] *meet one of the following qualifications:*

(i) Passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a nationally recognized, portfolio-based performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education;

(ii) An effective, or comparable, rating on a year-end evaluation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system, State-operated school, or approved nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10;

(iii) Complete a comprehensive induction program under § C(2) of this regulation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system; or

(iv) Hold a National Board Certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and (d) (text unchanged)

(2) Out-of-State License. Teacher candidates who hold a valid professional license/certificate from another state or foreign country shall meet the following requirements:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Beginning on July 1, 2025, [a passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a portfoliobased performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and] *meet one of the following qualifications:*

(i) Passing score as established by the State Superintendent of Schools on a portfolio-based performance assessment approved by the State Board of Education; [and]

(ii) An effective, or comparable, rating on a year-end evaluation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system, State-operated school, or approved nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10;

(iii) Complete a comprehensive induction program under $\$ C(2) of this regulation if the individual is employed by a Maryland local school system; or

(iv) Hold a National Board Certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and (d) (text unchanged)

(3) (text unchanged)

C. Special Provisions.

(1) The Department shall evaluate credits from institutions in other countries for comparability of degree and coursework by an independent agency authorized to analyze foreign credentials and designated by the Department. The evaluation is final.

[(2) A National Board Certificate may be submitted instead of a portfolio-based assessment.

(3) An effective, or comparable, rating on a year-end evaluation may be submitted instead of a portfolio-based assessment if the candidate meets the following criteria:

(a) Meets the requirements for initial licensure under A(3) or B(1)-(2) of this regulation; and

(b) Is employed by a Maryland local school system, State-operated school, or approved nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10.]

(2) Comprehensive Induction Program. A comprehensive induction program shall:

(a) Be developed by a local school system, either independently or collaboratively with other local school systems;

(b) Be approved by the Department;

(c) Last the lesser of three years or the amount of time a teacher holds a conditional license; and

(d) Include a locally developed portfolio component that is aligned with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards.

CAREY M. WRIGHT, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Schools



Fwd: Licensure Changes in Maryland--Visual Art

1 message

Young Nan Park Sohn <nparksohn01@mica.edu> To: Kelly Meadows -MSDE- <kelly.meadows@maryland.gov>

Mon, Nov 18, 2024 at 7:09 PM

Good Evening,

I am writing to include the below information in the public comment for Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure. As we explore how higher education institutions might better partner with LEAs as they transition to a 3-year induction period, which has potential to better support both MAP and MAAPP teacher candidates in teaching positions and toward licensure (for those hired under conditional licensure), we are hopeful that the transcript analysis pathway will remain open in the interim.

Thank you, and please let me know if I can provide any further information. Nan Park

Nan Park

MAT Faculty MA in Teaching 1300 W Mount Royal Ave. Baltimore, MD 21217 410.225.2530 https://www.mica.edu/graduate-programs/teaching-mat/ https://www.mica.edu/research/center-for-art-education/

----- Forwarded message ------

From: Young Nan Park Sohn <nparksohn01@mica.edu>

Date: Fri, Nov 8, 2024 at 4:05 PM

Subject: Licensure Changes in Maryland--Visual Art

To: Kelly Meadows -MSDE- <kelly.meadows@maryland.gov>, Sophia Fitzpatrick -MSDE- <sophia.fitzpatrick@maryland.gov>

Cc: Elizabeth Devereux -MSDE- <elizabeth.devereux@maryland.gov>

Good Afternoon,

I am following up regarding the changing licensure requirements in Maryland, effective April 1, 2024. I had emailed a question on Oct. 22 seeking clarification, and I appreciate your response and information. Since then, I have been talking with student advisees at MICA, as well as other arts partners in the local art education ecosystem to better understand the implications of what those changes will mean for the arts. I have copied Lizzie on this message as well.

As I understand it, the two possible pathways currently open for obtaining licensure in the arts in MD—per the April 1, 2024 effective date—are either a MD approved program (like MICA's MAT or other local teaching programs; for many, these are cost-prohibitive, whether it is in-state or out-of-state) or an alternative preparation pathway. The published MAAPP directory for MD has only *one* pathway that includes Art (Bard), and because it is a highschool pipeline/early college program, it enrolls specific students in that particular pipeline and does not apply to current undergraduate art students. This leaves only one pathway, a MD Approved Program, open to our MD students who do not wish to (or cannot) do an additional teaching degree.

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The elimination of the transcript analysis pathway closes teaching possibilities for students like these two current MICA students, highlighted below. Both of these students want to stay in Maryland to teach. Currently, if they get hired (in Baltimore City, for example) with conditional licensure, they will lose their jobs once the period for obtaining licensure (5 years with no renewal) runs out unless they enroll in a MAP, since there are no approved alternative programs for Visual Art in MD. Without the pedagogical coursework pathway toward certification (the transcript analysis pathway), they are at a huge disadvantage.

Here are their profiles. We are encountering more candidates like these, coming in as transfers or entering college later. Additionally, at MICA, we also sometimes have other studio-area graduates who are not enrolled in MAT but wish to enter the field of teaching with a graduate level MA or MFA degree. The closure of the transcript analysis pathway also eliminates these well-qualified Master's level candidates from local teaching positions.

Here are two I just advised this past week:

Student A--currently an undergraduate junior with a 3.9 GPA. He has been proactive in taking some of our undergraduate pedagogical courses due to his interest in teaching, but does not plan to remain in the 5-year dual-degree program due to the cost of that additional graduate year. He will graduate in 2026 with his BFA. He is interested in teaching post-BFA in Fall 2026.

Student B--was a MICA undergraduate some years ago, took a hiatus from college due to personal reasons and has returned to complete her degree. She is a senior currently enrolled in studio classes and 2 of our teaching courses. Because she has already been out in the professional world working for over a decade, she is ready to immerse in a teaching job. She will graduate with her BFA in Spring 2025 and hopes to find immediate full-time employment locally in a K-12 visual art context.

Given the shortage of teachers and existing vacancies, including in the arts, I am wondering if there is a way to ensure we keep the transcript analysis pipeline open, or, at the very least, consider strategies for capturing a group of prospective teachers who have immense studio knowledge, and more importantly, a commitment to children and teaching. At MICA over the past 5-ish years, we have invested in and partnered with local counties to offer affordable, high-quality, arts-based, online pedagogical coursework, including the Reading in the Content Areas I course through an art lens (which I believe may also be no longer relevant per the new requirements), so these changes have been difficult to navigate.

I am interested to 1) make sure I have correct information and 2) engage with conversation that will be helpful to keeping our teacher pipelines supported.

Thank you, Nan Park MAT Faculty / Coordinator of Undergraduate Art Education 443 980 9370



Public comment on Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure Notice of Proposed Action

1 message

Rachel McGrain <rmcgrain@aems-edu.org> To: kelly.meadows@maryland.gov Mon, Nov 18, 2024 at 3:41 PM

Dear Assistant State Superintendent Kelly Meadows,

My name is Rachel McGrain and I am the Executive Director of Arts Education in Maryland Schools. I am also a former Baltimore City Public Schools teacher who entered the profession on a conditional license. I am writing to comment publicly on the Maryland State Board of Education's proposed action to update Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure.

Throughout the recent process of the repeal and replacement of licensure regulations, there has been a quiet elimination of a transcript analysis route to teacher licensure. As I understand it, the remaining available in-state pathways are traditional or alternative approved programs or in-district training programs that have yet to be implemented by LEAs.

This is a serious concern for the vibrant arts community in Maryland because there are limitations to these pathways:

- 1. Traditional pathways: There are numerous high quality higher education programs in each of the arts disciplines, but students must pursue additional or extended degrees or programs in order to then become certified to **teach** those content areas. There are extremely limited options for dance and theatre educators; even for visual art and music programs that are more widely available, many require a fifth year which can pose a financial barrier.
- 2. Alternative pathways: There are currently no approved alternative certification programs for arts teachers in the state. Bard High School Early College offers a specific program for art and music within their institution, but the rest of the city and state does not have access to this pathway.
- 3. In-district training programs: In response to the Fine Arts Education Advisory Panel recommendations to Dr. Wright this past spring, MSDE leadership wrote back to the panel on June 24, 2024 that "The MSDE Comprehensive Arts Education Branch and Office of Program Approval will serve as liaison for any LEAs that are interested in piloting alternative preparation programs for arts educators." While this is a promising avenue, this exchange showcases that these pipelines do not currently exist and it will take time and resources to first develop a timeline and then work towards this goal.

This poses a significant barrier for retention of conditionally licensed hires after April 1, 2024, especially for well-qualified individuals who have fulfilled or exceeded credit hours required in studio practice/expertise. Those individuals are now left without a pathway to professional licensure if a traditional program is either not offered in their discipline or is inaccessible to them financially or logistically.

And while I hope that in-district programs will become available quickly, there is a present gap in opportunity for prospective teachers who have not yet begun pursuing certification. As it currently stands, if they are not able to pursue a traditional pathway then there is no path for them until in-district programs are developed.

Finally, teachers who are currently working on their licensure through this pathway have until March 31, 2027 to finish their coursework and requirements. However, institutions providing the coursework may now be disincentivized to continue offering those courses. And individuals on this path who do not meet the 2027 deadline may lose their license in the middle of the year if they are unable to enroll in a program to restart the process.

Given all of this information, I recommend the following actions:

1. The Maryland State Board of Education add a provision to the existing regulation to re-open the transcript analysis pathway for content areas, including the arts, that have limited in-state opportunities to pursue licensure through traditional and alternative pathways.

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2. The Maryland State Department of Education create a user-friendly, maximum 2-page document, with clear and concise information about the steps needed to secure conditional and ultimately professional licensure. This should be shared widely with IHEs, including professors and staff who directly support prospective teachers, as well as LEA leaders including arts supervisors who are directly involved in the recruitment and retention of arts teachers. This should also be publicly accessible so individuals outside of those institutions can better understand the steps to becoming an arts educator in Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

With Gratitude, Rachel McGrain

Rachel McGrain (she/her)

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Public Comment on Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure - Notice of Proposed Action

1 message

Gino Molfino <Gino_Molfino@hcpss.org> To: "kelly.meadows@maryland.gov" <kelly.meadows@maryland.gov> Fri, Nov 15, 2024 at 2:38 PM

To: kelly.meadows@maryland.gov Bcc: info@aems-edu.org Subject: Public Comment on Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure - Notice of Proposed Action

Dear Assistant State Superintendent Kelly Meadows,

My name is Gino Molfino, and I am a Coordinator of Fine Arts for the Howard County Public School System. I am writing to provide public comment on the Maryland State Board of Education's proposed updates to Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure.

I am deeply concerned about the quiet elimination of the transcript analysis route to teacher licensure during the repeal and replacement of licensure regulations. Under the revised framework, the remaining in-state pathways include traditional or alternative approved programs and in-district training programs, which local education agencies (LEAs) have yet to implement.

This change poses significant challenges for Maryland's vibrant arts education community due to the limitations of these pathways:

- **Traditional Pathways:** Currently, there are no active theater education programs in Maryland, and only one active dance education program at Towson University. Even for visual art and music programs, which are more widely available, many require an additional fifth year of study—posing a financial barrier for many aspiring educators. While Maryland boasts numerous high-quality higher education programs in arts disciplines, students often need to pursue additional degrees or certifications to qualify for teaching licensure in their fields.
- Alternative Pathways: At present, there are no approved alternative certification programs for arts educators in Maryland. While Bard High School Early College offers a program for art and music teachers within its institution, this pathway is not accessible to educators across the state.

As a result, these limitations create a significant barrier to retaining conditionally licensed arts educators after April 1, 2024. Many well-qualified individuals with advanced expertise or credit hours in their respective disciplines will lack a viable pathway to professional licensure if a traditional program is either unavailable in their content area or inaccessible due to financial or logistical constraints.

Additionally, for teachers currently pursuing licensure through the transcript analysis pathway, the March 31, 2027 deadline to complete their coursework and requirements adds further complications. Institutions providing the necessary courses may discontinue these offerings, leaving candidates without viable options to complete their requirements. Educators who fail to meet the deadline may lose their licenses mid-year, disrupting their careers and the students they serve.

As an arts educator and supervisor, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges that aspiring teachers face in navigating the licensure process, particularly in arts disciplines. For instance, I recently worked with a diverse candidate / talented theatre artist who held a master's degree from a prestigious university and had several years of professional experience as an actor. Despite their expertise, they struggled to find a pathway to licensure in Maryland because no in-state alternative certification program exists for theatre.

If Maryland does not address these barriers, we risk losing not just individual teachers but also the opportunity to strengthen arts education programs across the state.

In light of these challenges, I respectfully recommend the following actions:

1. **Reinstate the Transcript Analysis Pathway:** The Maryland State Board of Education should add a provision to the proposed regulation to reopen the transcript analysis pathway for content areas, including the arts, where in-

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state licensure opportunities are limited through traditional or alternative routes.

2. Improve Accessibility of Licensure Information: The Maryland State Department of Education should develop a concise, user-friendly document (maximum two pages) outlining the steps for obtaining conditional and professional licensure. This document should be shared widely with institutions of higher education (IHEs), including faculty and staff supporting prospective teachers, as well as LEA leaders, particularly arts supervisors involved in recruiting and retaining arts educators. It should also be made publicly accessible to ensure clarity for individuals outside these institutions.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. I urge the Maryland State Board of Education to consider these recommendations to support the continued growth and sustainability of arts education in our state.

Sincerely, Gino Molfino

Gino Molfino Coordinator, Fine Arts (Art, Dance, Theatre) Howard County Public School System Pronouns - he/him/his Phone - 410.313.6634 Fine Arts Office 5451 Beaverkill Road Columbia, MD 21044

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"Art helps us see connections & brings a more coherent meaning to our world."

-Earnest Boyer, President, Carnegie Foundation



Public comment on Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure Notice of Proposed Action

1 message

Julia Di Bussolo <julia@artseveryday.org> To: kelly.meadows@maryland.gov Mon, Nov 18, 2024 at 4:27 PM

Dear Assistant State Superintendent Kelly Meadows,

My name is Julia DiBussolo and I am the Executive Director of Arts Every Day, a nonprofit that advocates for the arts in Baltimore City Public Schools. I am writing to comment publicly on the Maryland State Board of Education's proposed action to update Title 13A Subtitle 12 Educator Licensure.

Throughout the process of the repeal and replacement of licensure regulations, there has been a quiet elimination of a transcript analysis route to teacher licensure. The remaining available in-state pathways are traditional or alternative approved programs or in-district training programs that have yet to be implemented by LEAs.

This is a serious concern for the vibrant arts community in Maryland - **<u>ESPECIALLY Baltimore City</u>** - because there are limitations to all of these pathways:

- 1. Traditional pathways: there are no active theatre education programs in Maryland, and there is only one active dance education program at Towson University. Even for visual art and music programs that are more widely available, many require a fifth year which can pose a financial barrier. There are numerous high quality higher education programs in each of the arts disciplines, but students must pursue additional degrees or programs in order to then become certified to **teach** those content areas.
- 2. Alternative pathways: There are currently no approved alternative certification programs for arts teachers in the state. Bard High School Early College offers a specific program for art and music within their institution, but the rest of the city and state does not have access to this pathway.

This poses a significant barrier for retention of conditionally licensed hires after April 1, 2024, especially for well-qualified individuals who have fulfilled or exceeded credit hours required in studio practice/expertise. Those individuals are now left without a pathway to professional licensure if a traditional program is either not offered in their discipline or is inaccessible to them financially or logistically.

The elimination of the Transcript Analysis Pathway will have a devastating impact on Baltimore City's ability to fill Fine Arts vacancies. For the past 6 years, Arts Every Day has partnered with Baltimore City to improve equitable access to visual art, music, theater, and dance through a community-support Fine Arts Strategic Plan. Since the district adopted the Fine Arts Plan in 2019, the district has gained nearly 150 arts teaching positions. Baltimore City currently has the largest number of conditionally certified teachers in the state. The elimination of the Transcript Analysis Pathway will make filling these positions even harder - especially as the district looks to increase the racial diversity of staff.

Finally, teachers who are currently working on their licensure through this pathway have until March 31, 2027 to finish their coursework and requirements. However, institutions providing the coursework may now be disincentivized to continue offering those courses. And individuals on this path who do not meet the 2027 deadline may lose their license in the middle of the year if they are unable to enroll in a program to restart the process.

I have the privilege of running a program that supports new teachers in their 1st through 3rd years of teaching. Many of the teachers we work with are conditionally certified and are at a critical juncture in their teaching experience. Since there are no approved programs with pathways in the arts, conditionally certified teachers who are already working in the school system will have no way of completing the certification process. This will lead to teachers losing their conditional status and leaving the classroom.

Given all of this information, I recommend the following actions:

- 1. The Maryland State Board of Education add a provision to the existing regulation to re-open the transcript analysis pathway for content areas, including the arts, that have limited in-state opportunities to pursue licensure through traditional and alternative pathways.
- 2. The Maryland State Department of Education create a user-friendly, maximum 2-page document, with clear and concise information about the steps needed to secure conditional and ultimately professional licensure. This should be shared widely with IHEs, including professors and staff who directly support prospective teachers, as well as LEA leaders including arts supervisors who are directly involved in the recruitment and retention of arts teachers. This should also be publicly accessible so individuals outside of those institutions can better understand the steps to becoming an arts educator in Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Sincerely, Julia DiBussolo, Executive Director



Julia Di Bussolo (she/her) Executive Director

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