

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

MEETING BOOKLET

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Place: Maryland Higher Education Commission
Nancy S. Grasmick Education Building
7th Floor Boardroom

Maryland Higher Education Commission

Catherine J. “Cassie” Motz, Chair

Chike Aguh, Vice Chair

Kathleen Bands, Ph.D.

Mickey L. Burnim, Ph.D.

Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.

Barbara Kerr Howe

Ray Serrano, Ph.D.

Rebecca Taber Staehelin

Sheila D. Thompson, Ph.D.

Craig A. Williams, Ph.D.

Janet E. Wormack, Ed.D.

Praise Alayode, Student Commissioner

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.

Secretary

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor



Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Cassie Motz
Chair

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Secretary

Maryland Higher Education Commission Meeting Agenda

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 18, 2024

PLACE: 7th Floor Board Room
Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

	Page	Action Item
--	-------------	------------------------

Call to Order

Chair's and Secretary's Remarks

Public Comments

Commission Meeting Minutes Approval

July 24, 2024.....	1	*
--------------------	---	---

Department of Finance and Administration – Mr. Geoffrey Newman

Operating and Capital Budget Presentations

- 10:00 a.m. – Baltimore City Community College – Dr. Debra L. McCurdy, President
- 10:45 a.m. – University System of Maryland – Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor
- 11:30 a.m. – St. Mary's College of Maryland – Dr. Tuajuanda Jordan, President
- 12:15 p.m. – Morgan State University – Dr. David Wilson, President
- 1:00 p.m. – Maryland Association of Community Colleges – Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director

Break 1:45 – 2:15 p.m.

- 2:15 p.m. – Maryland Independent College and University Association – Mr. Matthew Power, President
- 3:00 p.m. – Regional Higher Education Centers – Mr. Geoffrey Newman, Assistant Secretary for Finance and Administration, MHEC and Center Directors

Department of Academic Affairs – Dr. Emily Dow

Update: Mission Statement Review Timeline – Dr. Emily Dow

Update: Workforce Needs Analysis – Dr. Emily Dow

Adjournment

**The next Commission meeting will be on Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.*

Maryland Higher Education Commission
Meeting Minutes

July 24, 2024
10:00 a.m.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) met on Wednesday, July 24, 2024 via video teleconference (Google Meet).

Commission members present:

Catherine J. “Cassie” Motz, Chair	Ray Serrano, Ph.D.
Chike Aguh, Vice Chair	Rebecca Taber Stachelin
Kathleen Bands, Ph.D.	Sheila D. Thompson, Ph.D.
Mickey L. Burnim, Ph.D.	Craig A. Williams, Ph.D.
Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.	Praise Alayode, Student Commissioner
Barbara Kerr Howe	

Commission member absent:

Janet E. Wormack, Ed.D.	
-------------------------	--

Staff members present:

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.	Emily A. A. Dow, Ph.D.
Geoffrey Newman	Soma Kedia
Anthony Reiner	Kimberly Smith Ward
Derrick Coley	Ebony Walters
Daniel Schuster	Deborah Ing
Laura Schenk, DNP	Cara Martinez
Al Dorsett	Alexia Simmons
Alexandra Chaillou, Ph.D.	Allie Edelstein
Alexis Merriman	Brittany Martin
Kristin Clarkson	Shayla Hunter
Lyndsay Silva, D.P.A.	Trish Gordon McCown
Samuel Durai Pandian	Victoria Johnson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Motz** at approximately 10:00 a.m. A meeting quorum was established with eleven (11) out of twelve (12) members present.

Chair’s Remarks

Chair Motz welcomed everyone and reminded all to save the dates of the Student Success Summit on November 14-15 on their calendars.

Secretary's Remarks

Secretary Rai welcomed new Student Commissioner Praise Alayode to the Commission. She is a student at Coppin State University, double majoring in Computer Science and Mathematics. **Secretary Rai** then gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Commission Meeting Minutes Approval

Commissioner Howe made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 24, 2024, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Department of Academic Affairs – Proposed Bylaws for the Program Review Process Advisory Council – Action Item

Chair Motz recognized Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, to present this item. House Bill 1244 (Chapter 963 of the Acts of 2024) establishes the Program Review Process Advisory Council (“the Council” or “PRPAC”). The bylaws provide the following information:

- Purpose and objectives
- Composition of the council, including the nomination and appointment process
- Officers
- Meeting requirements
- Workgroups
- Council administration

Per the proposed bylaws, “the Council shall meet periodically for the purpose of creating or reviewing processes and procedures necessary to the Commission’s academic program review functions, as referred by the Commission or the Secretary for their consideration and advice. The Council shall solicit input from a variety of individuals who work with academic program proposals, including, but not limited to, faculty, department heads, deans, academic program directors, and governing boards, and from individuals who are employed at schools who are not currently on the rotating membership roster.”

The PRPAC will be comprised of 21 members, including a diverse group of rotating presidents and provosts from Maryland’s colleges and universities. Rotating members will serve for 4 years. Segmental leaders will have standing appointments.

The proposed bylaws were prepared by Soma Kedia, Assistant Attorney General.

Dr. Dow recommended that the Commission adopt the proposed bylaws for the Program Review Process Advisory Council.

Commissioner Serrano asked why there were no student members on the advisory council. Dr. Dow responded that the council's purpose and function were primarily administrative in nature. **Commissioner Alayode** agreed that the council could benefit from a student voice. After some discussion, **Vice Chair Aguh** motioned to amend the bylaws, adding that recommendations will be shared with the Student Advisory Council for their feedback (inserted after #15 Quorum and before #16 Public Comment). **Commissioner Howe** seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Burnim motioned to adopt the bylaws, as amended, and **Commissioner Howe** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Department of Academic Affairs – Proposed Regulatory Amendments – COMAR
13B.02.03.28, Commission Review of Academic Program Proposal Decisions – Action Item

Chair Motz recognized Dr. Dow to present this item. Under current regulations, the Commission delegates to the Secretary of Higher Education decisions regarding academic program proposals submitted under § 11-206 and § 11-206.1 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. However, those decisions are subject to Commission review upon request by the president of an institution of higher education. Once requested, the Commission holds a Review Meeting to hear from the institutions regarding proposal and decision.

HB 1244 (Chapter 963 of the Acts of 2024) adds certain requirements to the Review Meeting Process. Under this legislation, Review Meetings must:

- Be conducted in open session, including discussions and any formal action taken by the Commission;
- Allow each institution to have at least 10 minutes to present to the Commission, without interruption; and
- Require that any Commission decision resulting from the Review Meeting be approved by a majority of the members then serving on the Commission.

Additionally, the proposed amendments make significant changes to the Review Meeting process. These changes include:

- Making alterations to the timeline of the Review Meeting process to allow easier scheduling, get materials to Commissioners earlier, and give the institutions equal time to submit written materials;
- Simplifying the meeting presentations by changing the role of the Secretary from presenting to providing necessary information, providing for all involved institutions to have equal speaking time (15 minutes each), and removing “rebuttal” presentations;
- Requiring that the president of the institution present the institution's position to the Commission, with assistance from the Provost if desired;

- Requiring that presentations focus on the key points of the institution’s position as set forth in the written materials submitted and refer to the relevant COMAR provisions in making their arguments; and
- Adding decision-making procedures for the Commissioners to ensure clarity and transparency.

These changes are intended to immediately simplify the Review Meeting process while considering more substantial changes to the academic program review process, which will likely include additional changes to Commission review and Review Meetings.

The proposed amendments were prepared by Soma Kedia, Assistant Attorney General, and thus have been approved for legality by an Assistant Attorney General, as required by the Maryland Administrative Procedure Act.

Upon approval, the proposed regulations and regulatory amendments are submitted to the legislature’s Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR), after which they are submitted to the Division of State Documents (DSD) for publication in the Maryland Register. After a public comment period, they may be brought back before the Commission for final adoption.

Dr. Dow recommended that the Commission: (1) Approves for publication in the Maryland Register the proposed regulatory amendments for Commission Review of Academic Program Proposal Decisions; and (2) Authorizes its Assistant Attorney General to make non-substantive edits to the proposed regulations to conform to the stylistic and formatting requirements of AELR and DSD.

The Commissioners asked questions about the presentation. **Commissioner Burnim** motioned to approve the 1st recommendation and **Commissioner Taber Staehelin** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chair Aguh motioned to approve the 2nd recommendation and **Commissioner Thompson** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Department of Academic Affairs – Forthcoming Changes to the Regulatory Standard for Substantial Modification – Information Item

Chair Motz recognized Dr. Dow to present this item. Under § 11-206 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and COMAR 13B.02.03, the Commission reviews proposals for substantial modifications to existing academic programs. The review includes an evaluation of whether the substantial modification would make the existing program duplicative of a program at another institution. Currently, the standard for a modification to an existing program to be considered “substantial” is in COMAR 13B.02.03.03E, and includes:

- a. A change to more than 33 percent of an existing program’s course work;
- b. Offering an existing program as an off-campus program;
- c. Establishing a new area of concentration within an existing program; or
- d. Establishing a new program title within an approved program.

HB 1244 (Chapter 963 of the Acts of 2024) requires the Commission, in collaboration with institutions of higher education in the State, to “evaluate whether the existing standard that triggers the academic program review process for a substantial modification to an existing program established under...COMAR 13B.02.03.03E is the appropriate standard.” If the Commission determines that a new standard for establishing a substantial modification to an existing program is appropriate, the Commission must adopt regulations establishing the new standard no later than January 1, 2025.

In March 2024, MHEC convened a workgroup of representatives from all segments of higher education to discuss potential changes to the existing definition of substantial modification. To date, the group has met 4 times and we expect to have 2-3 more meetings.

The changes presented reflect recent workgroup discussions and recommended changes, such as:

- Increasing the threshold from 33% to 50%;
- Eliminating the requirement to submit the same information required in a new program proposal as a proposal for a substantial change; and,
- Removing text that was outdated or confusing.

The workgroup will meet on July 31, 2024, to further discuss these changes, and we expect to present a final draft of these changes to the Commission in August. In the interim, written comments from the public may be sent to Dr. Dow until August 14, 2024. The Commissioners asked questions about the presentation.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Student Financial Assistance – Proposed Regulations – COMAR 13B.08.21, Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships – Action Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Geoffrey Newman, Assistant Secretary for Finance and Administration, who asked Mr. Al Dorsett, Director of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, to present this item. In 2018, the legislature created the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship Program (Chapter 554 of the Acts of 2018) to provide “last dollar,” need-based financial assistance to students attending community college in the State. Originally, the program was only open to full-time students enrolling within 2 years of graduating high school and required a service obligation to work in the State after graduation. Through legislative amendments passed in 2019, 2020, and 2021, the legislature gradually expanded eligibility by, among other things, eliminating the service obligation requirement, removing the recent high school graduation requirement, and most importantly, opening the program to part-time students. In 2024, the legislature also eliminated the FAFSA filing and GPA requirements for non-credit students (Chapter 355 of the Acts of 2024).

In 2023, the legislature made a significant change by “decentralizing” the program (Chapter 634 of the Acts of 2023, HB 923). Instead of making scholarship awards directly to students, starting in FY25, the Commission’s Office of Student Financial Assistance would be responsible for allocating appropriated funds to the State’s 16 community colleges, who would then make awards to students.

All of these legislative amendments necessitate regulatory amendments. However, because of the extent of the changes to the program over the last 6 years, the enclosed proposed regulations would fully replace the existing regulations, which would be repealed. The new regulations:

- Delineate the division of responsibilities between the Commission and the community colleges in administration of the scholarship;
- Clarify student eligibility requirements, including the types of programs or courses in which students may be enrolled;
- Differentiate between eligibility requirements for students in credit-bearing programs and courses and students in non-credit programs and registered apprenticeships;
- As required by statute, set forth income eligibility verification procedures for community colleges;
- Set forth procedures for the Commission to annually allocate funds to each community college; and
- Include reporting, reconciliation, and audit requirements.

The proposed regulations were prepared by Soma Kedia, Assistant Attorney General, and thus have been approved for legality by an Assistant Attorney General, as required by the Maryland Administrative Procedure Act.

Upon approval, the proposed regulations and regulatory amendments are submitted to the legislature's Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR), after which they are submitted to the Division of State Documents (DSD) for publication in the Maryland Register. After a public comment period, they may be brought back before the Commission for final adoption.

Mr. Dorsett recommended that the Commission:

- (1) Approves for publication in the Maryland Register the proposed repeal of the current regulations and the proposed new regulations for the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship Program;
- (2) Authorizes its Assistant Attorney General to make non-substantive edits to the proposed regulations to conform to the stylistic and formatting requirements of AELR and DSD; and
- (3) Approve use of the proposed regulations to serve as official Program guidelines pending the promulgation of the proposed repeal of the current regulations and adoption of the new regulations for the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship Program.

The Commissioners asked questions about Mr. Dorsett's presentation. **Commissioner Howe** made a motion to approve the 1st recommendation, and **Commissioner Dukes** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. **Commissioner Howe** motioned to approve the 2nd recommendation, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. **Commissioner Dukes** motioned to approve the 3rd recommendation, and **Commissioner Thompson** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Student Financial Assistance – FY 2025 FAFSA and EEA Award Updates – Information Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Dorsett who reported that they continue to experience issues with the new FAFSA form. So far, they have received over 162,000 student records, compared to 174,000 last year. For the EEA Awards, more than 14,000 students have been awarded over \$113 million for FY 2025. The Commissioners asked questions about Mr. Dorsett's presentation.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Student Financial Assistance – Update on MDCAPS Request for Proposal (RFP) – Information Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Newman to present this item. Mr. Newman shared that the new system will be called MDSIS (Maryland Student Information System). The current system is called MDCAPS (Maryland College Aid Processing System). The evaluation committee has finished their review of the technical proposals from the vendors. Next, they will be looking at their financial proposals.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Student Financial Assistance – Update on FY 2025 Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship – Information Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Dorsett who reported that they have already given the community colleges their allocations for FY 2025. Since the budget did not change, the amount remained the same at \$50 million.

New Business

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Derrick Coley, Executive Director of External Relations, who introduced new employee, Ms. Kristin Clarkson, Director of Communications.

Chair Motz reminded Commissioners that they will be receiving soon a hard copy of the 2023 Performance Accountability Report in the mail.

Adjournment

Commissioner Burnim made a motion to adjourn, and **Commissioner Thompson** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:19 p.m.



Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Cassie Motz
Chair

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 18, 2024
TO: Commissioners, Maryland Higher Education Commission
FROM: Geoffrey Newman, Assistant Secretary for Finance and Administration
SUBJECT: Operating and Capital Budget Presentations

The following guidelines for Fiscal Year 2026 operating and capital budget presentations were sent to the University System of Maryland, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Morgan State University, Baltimore City Community College, the Maryland Association of Community Colleges, the Maryland Independent College and University Association, and the executive directors of the State's regional higher education centers.

Presenters were instructed to prepare 30 minute presentations and leave 15 minutes for questions from the Commissioners.

* * * * *

Please discuss how your FY 2026 budget requests will help to meet the following goals and priorities under the 2022 State Plan for Higher Education:

- **Access:** Ensure equitable access to affordable and quality postsecondary education for all Maryland residents.
 - Priority 1: Study the affordability of postsecondary education in Maryland.
 - Priority 2: Examine and improve financial literacy programs for students and families to encourage financial planning to pay for postsecondary education.
 - Priority 3: Analyze and improve systems that inform and evaluate a student's academic readiness for postsecondary education.
 - Priority 4: Analyze systems that impact how specific student populations access affordable and quality postsecondary education.
- **Success:** Promote and implement practices and policies that will ensure student success.
 - Priority 5: Maintain the commitment to high-quality postsecondary education in Maryland.
 - Priority 6: Improve systems that prevent timely completion of an academic program.
 - Priority 7: Enhance the ways postsecondary education is a platform for ongoing lifelong learning.
- **Innovation:** Foster innovation in all aspects of Maryland higher education to improve access and student success.
 - Priority 8: Promote a culture of risk-taking.

Additionally, the Commission is asking you to address the following questions and provide data, in addition to addressing the goals of the 2022 State Plan for Higher Education.

- Please discuss what percent of your annual budget is expended on instruction.

- Please discuss your anticipated undergraduate and graduate enrollment levels for the upcoming academic year.
- What measures have been implemented to monitor disparities between Black and Latino students compared to White and Asian students in terms of enrollment and graduation rates?
- Please provide information on student retention, specifically current efforts at institutions to improve student retention. Please provide information on the level of funding allocated to retention at institutions and the specific outcomes sought.

Please provide information on the loan burden for recent graduates, specifically:

- Data from exit interviews or surveys of recent graduates.
- Efforts made to minimize loan burdens, especially for low-income, first-generation students.
- The average size of debt compared to students' or graduates' incomes.



Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Cassie Motz
Chair

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Secretary

Maryland Higher Education Commission 2024 Meeting Dates

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is Maryland's higher education coordinating board responsible for the management of statewide financial aid programs and the establishment of statewide policies for public and private colleges and career schools to support students' postsecondary pursuits.

Commission meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., with certain exceptions, as noted below. Meetings in 2024 will be in-person in the 7th Floor Boardroom at the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Meetings will also be livestreamed.

Scheduled Meeting Dates for 2024

January 24, 2024

February 28, 2024

March 20, 2024
(3rd Wednesday)

April 24, 2024

May 22, 2024

June 26, 2024

July 24, 2024

August 28, 2024

September 18, 2024
(3rd Wednesday)

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

October 23, 2024

November 20, 2024
(3rd Wednesday)

December 11, 2024
(2nd Wednesday)

Dates, times, and locations are subject to change.

Please check this website for livestream links and the most up-to-date information:

<http://www.mhec.maryland.gov/About/Pages/Meetings.aspx>

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

6 N. Liberty Street • 10th Floor • Baltimore, MD 21201

T 410.767.3300 • 800.974.0203 • F 410.332.0270 • TTY for the Deaf 800.735.2258 www.mhec.maryland.gov