

**Maryland Higher Education Commission**  
Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2025  
10:00 a.m.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) met on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 via video teleconference (Google Meet).

**Commission members present:**

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

**Commission members absent:**

Ray Serrano, Ph.D.	
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**Staff members present:**

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.	Emily A. A. Dow, Ph.D.
Geoffrey Newman	Soma Kedia
Anthony Reiner	Kimberly Smith Ward
Derrick Coley	Daniel Schuster
Victoria Johnson	Deborah Ing
Al Dorsett	Trish Gordon McCown
Alexandra Nguyen	Stephanie Frangos
Allie Edelstein	Alexis Merriman
Ebony Walters	Tiffany Majors
Cara Martinez	Rose Robinson
Quentin Snively	Shayla Hunter
Kristin Clarkson	Alexandra Chaillou, Ph.D.
Thomas Waters	Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Glenda Abney	Melissa Leuschel

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Motz** at approximately 10:01 a.m. A meeting quorum was established with eleven (11) out of twelve (12) members present.

**Chair’s Remarks**

**Chair Motz** thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. She mentioned that the agency relocated offices on Friday and recently hired a few new staff members. MHEC is also currently busy with the legislative session, which began a couple of weeks ago.

### **Secretary's Remarks**

**Secretary Rai** remarked that MHEC was currently busy with the legislative session and their office relocation. First, he had some good news to share. In 2013, Maryland had set a goal that, by 2025, 55% of adults ages 25-64 would have at least an associate's degree. In the 2024 reporting year, Maryland institutions have awarded 727,093 undergraduate degrees, exceeding the target by almost 10,000 degrees. They are now finalizing new attainment goals. The Governor also recently unveiled the state's FY 2026 budget, which allocates funding to the various segments of higher education. He is grateful for the Moore-Miller Administration's support of their efforts. MHEC is committed to students and providing them with a quality education. The goal is to make Maryland one of the best states in the country for higher education. **Secretary Rai** then introduced MHEC's newest senior staff members, Ms. Tiffany Majors, Chief of Staff, and Ms. Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Deputy Secretary.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Finance Policy – FY 2027 Community College Construction Grant Program: State and Local Cost-Sharing Formula – Information Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Mr. Geoffrey Newman, Assistant Secretary for Finance and Administration, who asked Mr. Daniel Schuster, Finance Policy Analyst, to present this item. Mr. Schuster explained that the Community College Construction Grant Program provides State assistance for the construction and improvement of facilities at community colleges. This grant funds the construction of major new facilities, renovation of existing facilities, and improvements to campus infrastructure. Community colleges submit their projects in July.

The level of State participation in capital projects for the community colleges is determined by two criteria: the portion of the project that meets the space eligibility requirements for State support, and the State and local cost-sharing formula prescribed in statute and calculated by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). MSDE uses this cost-sharing formula to calculate the State's share in providing financial assistance for public education. The formula is based on a current expense calculation that considers the enrollment of students in elementary and secondary schools and county wealth (e.g., net taxable income, the assessed valuation of real property, and the assessed value of personal property).

Based on this cost-sharing formula, the State contributes between 50 percent and 70 percent of the eligible costs of a project for single-county-operated community colleges and 75 percent of the eligible costs of a project for regional community colleges. Baltimore City Community College is the only one that does not participate in this program, as it is a state entity, and their

projects are 100 percent funded by the State. The Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the presentation.

**Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Student Financial Assistance – Approval of Proposed Amendment to COMAR 13B.08.22.02 – Teaching Fellows for Maryland Scholarship Program – Action Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Mr. Newman who asked Mr. Al Dorsett, Executive Director of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, to present this item. Mr. Dorsett explained that the Teaching Fellows for Maryland Scholarship Program is open to both full-time and part-time students. Under current regulations, undergraduate students are considered full-time if they enroll in at least 12 credits and part-time if they enroll in at least 6 credits, but fewer than 12 credits. Graduate students are considered full-time if they enroll in at least 9 credits and part-time if they enroll in at least 6 credits, but fewer than 9 credits. While these definitions for full-time and part-time are standard among MHEC scholarship programs, it has prevented some students from having sufficient funds to complete their program and has prevented some from being eligible at all.

Given the severe teacher shortage in Maryland and the goal of the scholarship to increase the number of certified teachers in Maryland, the proposed amendments would alter these definitions to expand eligibility. Under the amended regulations, the definitions of full-time and part-time enrollment for graduate students would be based on the institution's own internal policy for classifying graduate students as full-time and part-time. Additionally, the definition for part-time enrollment for undergraduate students would be expanded to include those students enrolled in less than 6 credits. These changes would increase the number of students able to utilize the available scholarship funds.

Mr. Dorsett recommended that the Commission: (1) approves for publication in the Maryland Register the proposed regulatory amendments altering the definitions of full-time and part-time within the Teaching Fellows for Maryland Scholarship Program; and (2) authorizes its Assistant Attorneys General to make non-substantive edits to the proposed regulations to conform to the stylistic and formatting requirements of AELR (Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review) and DSD (Division of State Documents).

The Commissioners asked questions about Mr. Dorsett's presentation. **Commissioner Burnim** made a motion for approval, and **Commissioner Dukes** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Department of Academic Affairs – Approval of Proposed Amendment to COMAR 13B.02.01.07 – Out-of-State Institutions of Higher Education Operating in Maryland – Action Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, to present this item. Dr. Dow explained that, under current regulations, out-of-state institutions operating a physical campus in Maryland are only allowed to offer academic programs that are similar to

programs offered at its main or primary campus. This limits out-of-state institutions in providing academic programs that may help meet industry needs in Maryland.

The proposed regulatory change would allow an out-of-state institution to provide a justification for why a proposed program should be offered at its Maryland campus when that or a similar program is not offered at its main or primary campus. Under the proposed change, the Secretary could approve the academic program offering if the Secretary finds the justification to be sufficient. The proposed program would still be required to meet all MHEC regulatory requirements regarding academic programs. It would still be circulated to all other institutions of higher education in Maryland for comment or objection, and the Secretary would still deny any proposed program that was unreasonably duplicative or otherwise inconsistent with MHEC's statutory and regulatory obligations.

The proposed amendment has been approved for legality by MHEC's Assistant Attorney General as required by the Maryland Administrative Procedure Act and is ready for review and approval by the Commission. 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 amendment regarding academic programs at out-of-state institutions operating in Maryland; and (2) authorizes its Assistant Attorneys General to make non-substantive edits to the proposed regulations to the stylistic and formatting requirements of AELR and DSD.

The Commissioners asked questions about the presentation. **Commissioner Howe** made a motion for approval, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

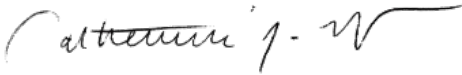
### **Update on Workforce Needs Analysis – Information Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. Dow to present this item. Since the presentation at the December Commission meeting on this topic, a draft of the analysis has been shared on MHEC's website. There is also a survey out to obtain feedback (due February 14). There have also been recent public discussions, including at the January 13 Segmental Advisory Council meeting and the January 14 meeting of the Advisory Council on Workforce Needs. Additionally, there will be a meeting of the Program Review Process Advisory Council on February 10 where there will be another opportunity to discuss the analysis. Feedback is currently being gathered and will be prepared in a summary analysis to present to the Commissioners at the February 26 monthly meeting. The Commissioners asked questions about the presentation.

### **Adjournment**

**Commissioner Howe** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

Approved by the Commission:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Catherine J. Motz', written over a horizontal line.

Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz, Chair