

MEMORANDUM

TO: Maryland Higher Education Commission
FROM: Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Interim Secretary
DATE: May 22, 2026
Subject: May Maryland Higher Education Commission Meeting

This memo serves as a summary and overview of the upcoming Maryland Higher Education Commission virtual meeting, scheduled for May 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Meeting materials and virtual access can be found at <https://mhec.maryland.gov/About/Pages/agendadetails.aspx?aid=573> Following the Call to Order and Acceptance of Minutes, the Commission Chair and I will provide introductory remarks. We deeply appreciate your continued dedication to guiding Maryland's higher education landscape.

Update on Workforce Pell Policy

We will be joined by colleagues from the Governor's Workforce Development Board to discuss the proposed Workforce Pell Policy framework. They will provide updates, review feedback received during the public comment period, and outline our next steps. Importantly, the U.S. Department of Education has just released the final [regulations](#) regarding Workforce Pell. This presentation will clarify how Maryland intends to implement these newly finalized regulations to support short-term, career-focused training programs.

Adoption of Conroy and Cryor Guidelines

The agenda will then proceed to the proposed funding allocation methodology and administrative guidelines for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program. These proposed changes aim to establish a standardized funding allocation methodology for distributing annual program appropriations to participating institutions. This action will ensure annual scholarship reimbursements do not exceed the appropriation authorized through the State budget while continuing to provide equitable support to students. The Commission will be asked to approve the proposed administrative guidelines and funding allocation methodology for the Conroy and Cryor scholarship program.

Acceptance of Enrollment Projections

Commission staff will present the 10-year enrollment projections for Maryland public colleges and universities for Fall 2035. These forecasts provide a critical perspective for facilities planning. The presentation will model the potential enrollment in Maryland, answering the overarching question of how many Marylanders our public institutions may need to educate a decade from now. We will recommend that the Commission accept the 2026-2035 enrollment projections and approve their distribution to the public, the campuses, and interested state agencies.

Updates on Legislative Reports

The Commission will also receive updates on pending legislative reports. This overview will highlight reporting requirements and operational improvements intended to streamline our internal processes while maintaining our strict commitment to transparency and accountability.

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor



Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz
Commission Chair

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Interim Secretary

Thank you again for your unwavering commitment to Maryland's students and postsecondary institutions. I truly value the expertise and partnership each of you brings to this Commission, and I look forward to a productive and engaging meeting. If you have any questions or need further clarification on any of the agenda items beforehand, please feel free to reach out to me directly.



MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION MEETING

May 27, 2026

10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

<https://meet.google.com/asb-ndag-zzf>

Agenda¹

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
- III. REMARKS**
 - A. Commission Chair
 - B. Interim Secretary
- IV. UPDATE ON WORKFORCE PELL POLICY**
- V. ADOPTION OF CONROY AND CRYOR GUIDELINES**
- VI. ACCEPTANCE OF ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS**
- VII. UPDATES ON LEGISLATIVE REPORTS**
- VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**
- IX. PUBLIC COMMENT²**
- X. ADJOURNMENT**

¹ The above listings of matters before the Maryland Higher Education Commission are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair of the Commission to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items, not listed, may also be brought up for discussion, to the extent such is permitted by law.

² The Commission may reserve time during the agenda of its regular meetings for public participation. The Chairperson may exercise discretion to waive the notice requirement set forth above and invite an individual(s) present at the meeting to address the Commission. Any person wishing to testify before the Commission must submit a written request to do so. The request must be addressed to the Secretary of Higher Education or to the Chair, and it must be sent to the attention of Alexandra Nguyen, alexandra.nguyen@maryland.gov. Written requests to testify will be accepted only until 72 hours prior to the meeting date. A request to testify will be acted upon by the Chair, who may, at his or her discretion, deny it, grant it, or grant it subject to time limitations, as described in Section II. Unless the Chair specifies otherwise, the maximum speaking time afforded to each individual making public comments will be three minutes.

Wes Moore
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Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor



Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz
Commission Chair

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Interim Secretary

Maryland Higher Education Commission

Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: April 22, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:44 PM EDT

Location: Virtual (Google Meet)

Chair: Catherine "Cassie" Motz

Minute Taker: Alex Nguyen

I. Attendance

Commissioners Present:

1. Catherine "Cassie" Motz (Chair)
2. Chike Aguh (Vice Chair)
3. Kathleen Bands
4. Mickey L. Burnim
5. Barbara Kerr Howe
6. Sarah Otwey (Student Commissioner; Joined at 10:25 AM)
7. Narcisa Polonio
8. Sheila Thompson
9. Craig Williams
10. Janet Wormack (Joined at 10:52 AM)

Commissioners Absent:

1. Charlene Dukes
2. Rebecca Taber Staehelin

II. Acceptance of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the March 25, 2026 meeting.

- **Motion:** Commissioner Burnim moved to approve the minutes.

- **Second:** Commissioner Howe seconded the motion.
 - **Action:** Approved unanimously.
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III. Remarks

A. Commission Chair

- Chair Motz commended Interim Secretary Quiroz-Livanis for "hitting the ground running" during the final weeks of the legislative session.
- Recognized Administrative Professionals Day, thanking MHEC staff for their essential contributions.

B. Interim Secretary

- Interim Secretary Quiroz-Livanis thanked the Governor and Lieutenant Governor for the appointment.
 - Introduced her core operating principle: State policy must deliver tangible, life-changing outcomes for learners, moving beyond access to socioeconomic mobility.
 - Outlined a "30-60-90 day plan" focused on sustaining operations, optimizing internal capacity, and setting a strategic path forward.
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IV. 2026-2030 Maryland State Plan for Higher Education Updates

Interim Secretary Quiroz-Livanis and Vice Chair Aguh provided an update on the plan's development.

- **Refined Goals:**
 1. **Goal 1:** Lifelong success and post-secondary attainment.
 2. **Goal 2:** Socioeconomic mobility and post-completion success (pivoting from "value" language based on stakeholder feedback).
 3. **Goal 3:** Mobilizing the ecosystem for state economic competitiveness (aligning with the Governor's Economic Competitiveness Subcabinet).
- **Survey Findings:** Affordability was identified as the top barrier to completion, while a lack of alignment between education and the workforce was the primary barrier to attainment.
- **Strategy Pillars:** The framework focuses on access/readiness (e.g., direct admissions), post-completion success (e.g., credit for prior learning), and whole-of-government alignment.
- **AI Readiness:** Vice Chair Aguh emphasized that AI proficiency is now "table stakes" for the workforce and essential for equity.

- **Timeline:** A final draft will be reviewed in May, with a vote for adoption scheduled for June.
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V. Research & Data Dashboards

Dr. Barbara Schmertz presented an overview of the Research and Policy Analysis unit's work.

- **Data Ecosystem:** MHEC processes millions of de-identified records annually, undergoing rigorous validation before release.
 - **Dashboard Demo:** Dr. Schmertz demonstrated the Academic Momentum Dashboard, which tracks early success indicators such as first-year math/English completion and credit accumulation.
 - **Accessibility:** All dashboards include downloadable data for public use and transparency.
 - **Partnerships:** The team collaborates with academic researchers (e.g., University of Delaware) on policy briefs regarding math reform and transfer credit loss.
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VI. Legislative & FY2027 Budget Updates

A. FY2027 Operating Budget

- The total state funding for higher education is \$3.5 billion.
- MHEC's operating budget is \$860.1 million.
- The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) reduced MHEC's budget by \$31.8 million, affecting the Cade, Sellinger, and various financial aid grants.
- MHEC remains lean, with 98% of its budget flowing directly to institutions and students.

B. Student Financial Assistance (OSFA)

- Director Al Dorsett reported that \$221.8 million is allocated for financial aid.
- **EA Awards:** To date, \$74.8 million has been awarded to 4,597 students in the current cycle.
- **HBCU Liaison:** The budget includes funding for MHEC's first-ever HBCU liaison position.

C. Capital Budget

- Dan Schuster reported a final enacted capital budget of over \$461 million for FY2027 to support ongoing community college and university projects.

D. Legislative Session & Reporting

- Meghan Music noted a significant increase in reporting requirements. MHEC now has 62 total reporting obligations, including 10 new Joint Chairman's Reports (JCR).

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Commission Chair

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Interim Secretary

- **Funding Restrictions:** Four JCRs currently restrict \$1.4 million in agency funds until specific audit and financial reports are submitted.
- **OSFA Study:** The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) will conduct a study on the feasibility of relocating OSFA out of MHEC.
- **Departmental Success:** SB 207/HB 231 passed, successfully delaying the decentralization of the Guaranteed Access Grant to ensure operational stability.

VII. Other Business

- Chair Motz introduced Ruffin "Chip" Brown as the new Director of Communications.
- Commissioners requested a monthly status report on outstanding JCRs tied to restricted funding.

VIII. Adjournment

- **Next Meeting:** May 27, 2026.
- **Commissioner Retreat:** May 21, 2026.
- **Motion:** Vice Chair Aguh moved to adjourn.
- **Second:** Commissioner Burnim seconded the motion.
- **Action:** Meeting adjourned at 12:44 PM.

Approved by the Commission:

Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz, Chair

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor



Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz
Commission Chair

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Interim Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Maryland Higher Education Commissioners
FROM: Al Dorsett, Executive Director, Office of Student Financial Assistance
DATE: May 22, 2026
SUBJECT: Approval of Proposed Funding Allocation Methodology and Administrative Guidelines for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program

HB 3/ SB 212: Higher Education – Student Financial Assistance – Dependents of State or Local Public Safety Employees (Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)

This memorandum highlights the administration and funding distribution process for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program. The proposed changes intend to ensure scholarship expenditure remains within the annual State appropriation while continuing to provide equitable support to eligible students and participating institutions.

Purpose of the Proposal

The purpose of this proposal highlights the need for updated allocation procedures and operational guidelines to align program administration with statutory requirements, fiscal limitations, and long-term program sustainability.

The proposals aim to:

- Establish a standardized funding allocation methodology for distributing annual program appropriations to participating institutions;
- Ensure annual scholarship reimbursements do not exceed the appropriation authorized through the State budget;
- Support equitable distribution of State scholarship funds;
- Strengthen fiscal oversight and accountability through standardized reporting and certification requirements;
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and audit standards; and
- Enhance MHEC's ability to monitor expenditures, utilization trends, and overall program sustainability;

Rationale

The Conroy and Cryor scholarship programs have increased program participation and reimbursement obligations in recent years, resulting in expenditures exceeding available appropriations. The establishment of a formal allocation methodology and administrative guidelines ensure scholarship expenditures remain within the funding appropriation authorized by the Department of Budget and Management and the General Assembly.

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A copy of the enacted bill is enclosed for your reference. The attached proposed guidelines and allocation methodology for this scholarship align with the statutory changes made by the legislature.

Developing a standardized allocation methodology and administrative guidelines will provide greater transparency and predictability for participating institutions. The proposed allocations and guidelines support the Commission's responsibility to administer State financial aid programs in a fiscally responsible and legally compliant manner.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Approve the proposed administrative guidelines and funding allocation methodology for the Conroy and Cryor scholarship program.

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor



Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz
Commission Chair

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Interim Secretary

DATE: May 12, 2026
TO: Maryland Higher Education Commission
FROM: Barbara Schmertz STAFF: Yuxin Lin
Dan Schuster
SUBJECT: Maryland Higher Education Commission Maryland Public Colleges and
Universities Enrollment Projections 2026 2035

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has prepared 10-year enrollment projections for Maryland public colleges and universities for Fall 2035. The projections include headcount projections for each institution, with separate analyses for full- and part-time undergraduates and, as applicable, full- and part-time graduate/professional students. Full-time equivalent (FTE) were calculated by applying a mathematical formula to the headcount figures. Projections have also been developed for state-funding-eligible FTE noncredit continuing education enrollments at community colleges.

These projections are produced to fulfill a regulatory charge.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission produces 10-year enrollment projections for Maryland public colleges and universities (13B.07.04.01)

B. The Commission shall establish annually:

(2) Enrollment projections to be used by the college to prepare capital construction projects.

C. For purposes of determining the statutory limit on State financial participation in the college capital construction projects, the proposed capacity of the college in number of students shall be the approved projected 10-year full-time equivalent enrollment as adopted by the Commission.

The projections model aims to answer the question "How many Marylanders may be enrolled in postsecondary education in ten years?" These projections reflect the *potential* enrollment in Maryland – the number of students Maryland public institutions need to educate ten years from now – disaggregated by segment, institution, and specific subpopulations.

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These projections provide perspective to higher education policy discussions at the state level, including facilities planning and other funding priorities. The Department of Budget and Management and the General Assembly may use the Commission's forecasts as the State's official enrollment projections.

In the model, the Commission uses statistical methodologies for projecting credit enrollments and FTE at community colleges and public four-year institutions. A third method is applied to produce the projections of in-state noncredit continuing education FTE enrollments at the community colleges. The projections involve the application of regression models based on a series of assumptions on the factors that may have an impact on enrollment. The final products include FTE enrollment figures to assist in planning capital projects on a 10-year time horizon.

For FY 2026, MHEC enrollment projections forecast that the statewide potential credit headcount enrollment will rise to 337,214 by Fall 2035, a 11.9% increase over 10 years. Public four-year institutions will experience a 9.9% increase in undergraduate enrollment and a 16.7% increase in graduate enrollment, and community colleges are estimated to observe a 12.7% increase in the next 10 years.

For FTE calculations, the projections' baseline year is Fall 2024 due to the sources of the data. Over the 10 years, public four-year institution FTE undergraduate enrollment is expected to grow 12.5% and community college credit FTE is expected to increase 21.2%. Non credit FTE at the community colleges is projected to grow 6.4%.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Maryland Higher Education Commission accept the 2026-2035 enrollment projections and approve their distribution to the public, the campuses, and interested state agencies.