

# **MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**

## **MEETING BOOKLET**

Time: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Place: Video Teleconference

## **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**



# Maryland Higher Education Commission

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**Governor**  
Wes Moore

**Lt. Governor**  
Aruna Miller

**Secretary**  
Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.

**Commission Chair**  
Cassie Motz

**Commission Vice Chair**  
Chike Aguh

**Commissioners**  
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

**Principal Counsel**  
Kimberly Smith Ward

## Maryland Higher Education Commission Meeting Agenda

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.  
Wednesday  
February 26, 2025

**PLACE:** Virtual  
(via Google Meet)

	<b>Page</b>	<b>Action Item</b>
<b>Call to Order</b>		
<b>Chair’s and Secretary’s Remarks</b>		
<b>Public Comments</b>		
<b>Commission Meeting Minutes Approval</b>		
• November 20, 2024.....	1	*
• December 11, 2024.....	7	*
• January 22, 2025.....	11	*
<b>Update on the Maryland State Plan for Higher Education</b>		
<b>Department of Academic Affairs – Dr. Emily Dow</b>		
• Office of Research & Policy Analysis – Dr. Barbara Schmertz 2024 Performance Accountability Report – Dr. Yuxin Lin.....	16	*
<b>Update on Workforce Needs Analysis</b>		
<b>Commission will enter into Closed Session to receive legal advice of Counsel regarding a pending Administrative Appeal, in compliance with § 3-305 (b)(7) of the General Provisions Article, <u>Annotated Code of Maryland.</u></b>		
<b>Adjournment</b>		

*\*The next Commission meeting will be on Wed., March 26, 2025 @ 10 a.m.*

**Maryland Higher Education Commission**  
Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2024  
10:00 a.m.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) met on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 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.
Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.	Craig A. Williams, Ph.D.
Barbara Kerr Howe	Janet E. Wormack, Ed.D.
Ray Serrano, Ph.D.	

**Commission members absent:**

Kathleen Bands, Ph.D.	Praise Alayode, Student Commissioner
Mickey L. Burnim, Ph.D.	

**Staff members present:**

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.	Emily A. A. Dow, Ph.D.
Geoffrey Newman	Soma Kedia
Alexandra Nguyen	Kimberly Smith Ward
Derrick Coley	Alexis Merriman
Trish Gordon McCown	Deborah Ing
Alexandra Chaillou, Ph.D.	Allie Edelstein
Lyndsay Silva, D.P.A.	Alexia Simmons
Brittany Martin	Glenda Abney
Bryson Barksdale	Khia Poteat
Cara Martinez	Kristin Clarkson
Ebony Walters	Melissa Leuschel
Elena Quiroz-Livanis	Quentin Snively
Rose Robinson	Shayla Hunter
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 nine (9) out of twelve (12) members present.

## **Chair's Remarks**

**Chair Motz** congratulated the Commission on a successful Student Success Summit on November 14-15 at the Universities at Shady Grove. She thanked the team for their work in putting it together and remarked that she looked forward to receiving the follow-up items from the institutions in the coming weeks.

## **Secretary's Remarks**

**Secretary Rai** thanked all higher education colleagues for attending the Summit, which was very successful. He also thanked Commissioners for their guidance. Lastly, he thanked MHEC staff for their work in organizing the Summit.

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **Office of the Attorney General – Final Adoption of Regulations and Regulatory Amendments – Amendments to Regulations for Academic Program Review – Standards for Substantial Modification (COMAR 13B.02.03) – Action Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Ms. Soma Kedia, Assistant Attorney General, to present this item. Ms. Kedia explained that this item is a final adoption of proposed regulations that were approved for initial publication in the Maryland Register by the Commission on August 28, 2024. The amendments to the academic program review regulations relate to the standards for substantial modification. Their purpose is to fulfill the requirement in Chapter 963 of the Acts of 2024 (HB 1244). To that end, MHEC convened a workgroup of representatives from the various segments of higher education, which met five times in 2024. The changes agreed upon by MHEC staff and the workgroup include:

- Increase the threshold for substantial curriculum changes from 33% of the existing coursework to 50%;
- Except from review any changes required by accreditors, licensing boards, or other state or national entity that governs academic program elements required to enter into a particular field or industry;
- Eliminate the requirement to submit the same information required in a new program proposal as a proposal for a substantial change; and
- Remove text that was outdated or confusing.

The proposed regulatory amendments were published in the Maryland Register on October 4, 2024. The public comment period for the amendments ended on November 4, 2024, and no public comments were received. The regulatory amendments became eligible for final adoption on November 19, 2024.

Ms. Kedia recommended that the Commission approves for final adoption the proposed amendments to the regulations for the standards for substantial modification under academic

program review, with an effective date of January 31, 2025. **Commissioner Dukes** made a motion for approval, and **Commissioner Howe** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Review Meeting – Towson University Proposal for a Ph.D. in Sustainability and Environmental Change**

**Chair Motz** thanked the institutions for attending today’s review meeting. She explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review the decision of the Secretary of Higher Education, at the request of Towson University (TU), to deny TU’s program proposal for a Ph.D. in Sustainability and Environmental Change. Morgan State University (MSU) had objected to the new program proposal. **Chair Motz** then provided the background and the process of the review meeting.

**Chair Motz** recognized Secretary Rai to begin the first presentation. **Secretary Rai** asked the Commission to affirm his decision to deny Towson University’s proposal. The proposed program is duplicative of MSU’s existing program. Rather, he would like to see an alternative path forward where both schools can collaborate. TU should consider expanding their successful bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in environmental science, preparing their students to enter MSU’s Ph.D. program.

Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, continued with the presentation. She noted that both programs (TU’s proposed program and MSU’s existing program) have similar content. Furthermore, the admissions criteria for both programs are similar. Maryland labor data also does not show a demand for an advanced degree in environmental science. Overall, there is no educational justification for the duplication of a high demand program at a Historically Black Institution (HBI). If the program is approved and implemented, there would be harm caused to another institution, the students, and the State. Lastly, the schools’ missions were considered. Both schools are public institutions and only 5 miles away from each other.

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. Mark Ginsberg, President of Towson University, to begin their presentation. Dr. Ginsberg asked Dr. Alison Wrynn, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for the University System of Maryland, to speak first. Dr. Wrynn remarked that Towson University’s (TU) program is not duplicative of MSU’s program. She hoped that the Commission would reverse the Secretary’s decision.

Dr. Ginsberg noted that their program meets statewide needs, aligning with Governor Moore’s executive order on climate change. The program is unique and unlike any other in the state, drawing together diverse disciplines to focus on sustainability. It is not duplicative of MSU’s program, based on curricular content, admissions requirements, and graduate outcomes, etc.

Dr. Melanie Perreault, Provost and Executive Vice President, remarked that the Secretary’s denial letter referenced an outdated mission statement. Towson University consulted with Maryland institutions during the proposal development and revised their proposal to clarify differentiation from MSU’s program. Their program would advance both universities with new opportunities for research collaboration and innovation.

Dr. Sya Buryn Kedzior, Assistant Program Director, noted that MHEC mislabeled TU's program. There is an environmental studies (not science) program focused on sustainability. The purpose and academic content of both programs are different. 100% of the coursework of MSU's program is in the hard sciences, while less than 50% of the coursework of TU's program is in the hard sciences. Applicants to the two programs will have different academic interests.

Dr. Joel Moore, Program Director, stressed that the required courses are significantly different. There is strong demand for sustainability jobs forecasted.

The Commissioners asked clarifying questions about TU's and MHEC's presentations.

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. Dow to present rebuttal remarks. Dr. Dow noted that TU's program is both environmental science and environmental studies. In fact, Towson University highlights science-based occupations for which program graduates would be eligible. Secondly, in response to TU's idea that graduates could seek academic jobs, this information was not presented in their original proposal. As the Secretary remarked, there is support to expand TU's existing undergraduate and graduate programs. Collaboration between TU's and MSU's existing programs would best serve the state's interests. The Commissioners asked clarifying questions.

**Chair Motz** recognized Towson University to present rebuttal remarks. Dr. Perreault referred to Dr. Dow's claim that science is an element of TU's program, and responded that this does not describe their program entirely. In fact, other existing and similar, science-based programs in the state did not object. TU's prospective graduates would be able to teach environmental studies, but not those of MSU's program. Students are requesting this program, but are also regularly referred to MSU's program. TU sees opportunities for and looks forward to future collaboration with Morgan State University on research. The Commissioners asked some clarifying questions.

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. David Wilson, President of Morgan State University (MSU), to speak about their program. Dr. Wilson stated that TU's program is unreasonably and unnecessarily duplicative of MSU's program. He made several points. One, MSU takes seriously the idea of program duplication. Second, their Board of Regents would not allow the unnecessary and unreasonable duplication of other academic programs in the state. Lastly, they have not received any objections to their program proposals. MSU would welcome opportunities to collaborate with Towson University.

Dr. Chunlei Fan, Director of the Bioenvironmental Science Ph.D. Program, noted that both programs are interdisciplinary in nature. Additionally, the curriculum of the proposed program remains unchanged from their 2023 proposal. Given the close proximity of the two institutions, implementing TU's proposed program would cause a reduction in enrollment of MSU's high-demand program. It would also result in a reduction of funding and resources to their program, affecting its sustainability and growth.

The Commissioners asked questions about MSU's presentation.

The Commissioners began their deliberations, discussing first the question of duplication. **Commissioner Howe** remarked that Towson University's program is duplicative of Morgan State University's program. Among other things, they would be hiring faculty for their programs from the same pool of applicants. **Vice Chair Aguh** agreed that the programs are very similar. **Commissioner Wormack** noted that some of the courses overlap. **Commissioner Thompson** remarked that, because of the similarities between the two programs, she wasn't convinced that TU's program was unique. **Commissioners Serrano, Dukes, Williams, and Motz** concurred that the proposed program is duplicative.

The Commissioners then discussed the question of whether or not the duplication was unreasonable. **Vice Chair Aguh** shared that he would look at market demand first. In this case, he does not see a market demand to justify duplication. **Commissioner Taber Staehelin** voiced her agreement with this statement. A discussion followed regarding where graduates find employment (in-state or out-of-state) and whether or not the programs can train future faculty. It was recalled that for both programs, many students stay in-state after graduation. In answer to the question about faculty, Towson had suggested that their graduates could later accept teaching roles. **Commissioner Howe** remarked that Morgan's program could easily expand if they needed to. Thus, it was not reasonable to allow Towson to implement their proposed program. **Commissioner Thompson** agreed and added that MSU already had a successful program in place with a steady source of funding. **Commissioner Serrano** believed that some harm would inevitably come to MSU's program, should TU's program be approved.

The Commissioners discussed next whether demonstrable harm would be caused, if there is unreasonable duplication. **Commissioner Howe** stated that all 3 questions can be answered positively. She believed that both programs would be competing for the same faculty, so there is evidence of demonstrable harm. **Commissioner Dukes** shared that she felt torn about the issue, though she thought that faculty could be recruited from any location. **Commissioner Wormack** stressed that the market demand did not support the need for such a program. TU's bachelor's and master's programs were already doing very well. **Vice Chair Aguh** added that MSU is not turning students away from their program. At the same time, he applauded TU's efforts and voiced his support for what they were trying to accomplish.

**Commissioner Howe** made a motion to affirm the Secretary's decision to deny Towson University's proposed program for a Ph.D. in Sustainability and Environmental Change. If approved and implemented, TU's proposed program would be unreasonably duplicative of MSU's existing program and cause demonstrable harm to it. **Commissioner Thompson** seconded the motion. **Chair Motz** called the roll:

Howe – AYE

Thompson – AYE

Wormack – AYE

Serrano – AYE

Taber Staehelin – AYE

Williams – AYE

Dukes – OPPOSED



Aguh – AYE

Motz – AYE

With 8 in favor and 1 opposed, the motion passed.

**Commissioner Taber Staehelin** commended everyone for their commitment to ensuring a fair process. However, it seemed disproportionate for the Commission to spend so much time discussing a program that affected so few people, when there are 1.8 million Marylanders without a college degree, hundreds of thousands of whom were living in poverty. Perhaps these review meetings should only be necessary if there were more than a hundred individuals who were affected.

### **Adjournment**

**Vice Chair Aguh** made a motion to adjourn, and **Chair Motz** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

**Maryland Higher Education Commission**  
Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2024  
10:00 a.m.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) met on Wednesday, December 11, 2024 via video teleconference (Google Meet).

**Commission members present:**

Catherine J. “Cassie” Motz, Chair	Rebecca Taber Staehelin
Kathleen Bands, Ph.D.	Sheila D. Thompson, Ph.D.
Mickey L. Burnim, Ph.D.	Craig A. Williams, Ph.D.
Barbara Kerr Howe	Janet E. Wormack, Ed.D.

**Commission members absent:**

Chike Aguh, Vice Chair	Ray Serrano, Ph.D.
Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.	Praise Alayode, Student Commissioner

**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
Samuel Durai Pandian	Trish Gordon McCown
Alexandra Nguyen	Alexia Simmons
Allie Edelstein	Ann Kellogg, Ph.D.
Bryson Barksdale	Brittany Martin
Cara Martinez	Rose Robinson
Khia Poteat	Shayla Hunter
Kristin Clarkson	Alexandra Chaillou, Ph.D.
Donita Moore	Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Glenda Abney	Melissa Leuschel
Thomas Waters	

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Motz** at approximately 10:01 a.m. A meeting quorum was established with eight (8) out of twelve (12) members present.

**Chair’s Remarks**

**Chair Motz** welcomed everyone to today’s meeting and gave an overview of the agenda. She mentioned that MHEC was currently preparing for the upcoming financial aid season, as well as planning to relocate their offices next month.

### **Secretary’s Remarks**

**Secretary Rai** shared some reflections on accomplishments in higher education as they close out the year. Among other things, they have been able to expand scholarship opportunities, making the Promise Scholarship available now to non-credit students and those in certificate programs. They have also expanded internships and apprenticeships, allowing students to gain hands-on experience while pursuing their degrees. Maryland is addressing barriers to education by investing in programs that support first-generation college students, students of color, and students from underrepresented communities. However, there is still much work to be done. In the new year, they hope to focus on expanding dual enrollment and early college programs.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Commission Meeting Minutes Approval**

**Commissioner Howe** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 23, 2024, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Presentation by BCR Cyber and MACC (Maryland Association of Community Colleges)**

**Chair Motz** recognized Mr. Bruce Spector, BCR Cyber Chairman of the Board, and Dr. Monica Randall, Deputy Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges, to present this item. The Maryland Community College Cybersecurity Workforce Accelerator Program is an initiative led by BCR Cyber and the Maryland Association of Community Colleges. There are currently 30,000 vacant cybersecurity jobs in Maryland. By providing state-of-the-art cybersecurity training at Maryland’s community colleges, the state is building the most advanced, highly diverse state and local IT workforce in the nation. The goal of the partnership is to establish a regional training center in each of the 16 Maryland community colleges. By spring of 2025, cyber ranges will be installed at each school. The program hopes to become a model for the rest of the nation to follow.

### **Updates on House Bill 1244 (2024 Legislative Session) – Information Item**

**Chair Motz** recognized Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, to present this item. One of the requirements of House Bill 1244 (Maryland Higher Education Commission – Academic Program Approval and Institutional Mission Statements – Requirements) is to develop four (4) appendices:

- 1) A list of in-demand occupations (state & regional workforce needs).

- 2) A list of in-demand academic programs (academic programs that would address workforce needs).
- 3) A list of emerging workforce needs.
- 4) A list of emerging workforce need programs.

Dr. Dow explained that the lists will be updated annually. In January, the Commission approves and releases the appendices. She then walked through the processes of developing these lists. Next steps include releasing the lists for public comment, meeting with the Advisory Council on Workforce Shortage to obtain feedback, review received comments, and prepare lists for final adoption at the January Commission meeting. The Commissioners asked questions about Dr. Dow's presentation. **Commissioner Bands** suggested soliciting feedback from the Program Review Process Advisory Council as well. **Chair Motz** agreed and remarked that it would be ideal to meet with the Council to obtain their input before the January Commission meeting. In terms of assessing workforce needs, **Commissioner Burnim** suggested looking at regions within the state, rather than a larger area.

Dr. Dow explained that letters of intent are another requirement. Beginning January 1, 2025, public senior higher education institutions are required to submit a letter of intent for all new graduate programs the institution intends to propose within the 6-month to 2-year time period following submission of the letter of intent. The purpose is to facilitate collaboration between institutions and to provide feedback to an institution before a program is submitted for approval. Potential sections of this letter include basic information, draft program details, mission, need, duplication, intended population, existing resources, new resources, and external considerations. Every 6 months, letters of intent would be requested. After a letter is received, it is circulated to the institutions for their review. It is also reviewed by an analyst for concerns and potential opportunities to collaborate, which are then shared with the proposing institution. The next steps include sharing this information with the Program Review Process Advisory Council for their feedback, preparing materials and guidance, and providing updates to the Commission (including one on implementation after the first round of letters is received in summer 2025). It is expected that the process will be implemented in spring 2025. The Commissioners asked questions about Dr. Dow's presentation.

Dr. Dow explained that mission statements are another requirement, though this is limited to public colleges & universities and regional higher education centers. Currently, criteria are being finalized for review of institutional distinctions. In the spring, MHEC will request the institutions to submit narratives about what makes them distinct. In the summer and fall, MHEC will review and provide feedback on the submitted institutional distinctions. After the 2026 State Plan for Higher Education is released, institutions will be asked to submit their mission statements for review. This is a statutory requirement. The Commissioners asked questions about Dr. Dow's presentation.

### **Review of NC-SARA Participation Appeal**

**Chair Motz** stated that the Commission will now review an appeal. The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) was formed to coordinate regulation of distance education programs to ensure consistency among the states. Maryland is a member, as

well as the District of Columbia. As this appeal relates to the administration of existing law, rather than the development of new policy, this portion of the meeting is not subject to the Open Meetings Act. Therefore, the Commissioners will now adjourn and connect to another virtual meeting link to review this appeal.

### **Adjournment**

**Commissioner Burnim** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and **Commissioner Howe** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Approved by the Commission:

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Catherine J. “Cassie” Motz, Chair

**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:

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Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz, Chair



# Maryland Higher Education Commission

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## MEMORANDUM

**Governor**  
Wes Moore

**Lt. Governor**  
Aruna Miller

**Secretary**  
Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.

**Commission Chair**  
Cassie Motz

**Commission Vice Chair**  
Chike Aguh

**Commissioners**  
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

**Principal Counsel**  
Kimberly Smith Ward

DATE: Feb 14, 2025

TO: Maryland Higher Education Commission

FROM: Barbara Schmertz

STAFF: Yuxin Lin

SUBJECT: MSAR #709 2024 Performance Accountability Report

The annual Performance Accountability Report (PAR) serves as an important mechanism by which public colleges and universities in Maryland are held accountable. Through a performance accountability plan, institutions are required to establish and maintain performance standards, and use metrics to assess their effectiveness in tackling institutional and statewide higher education goals. Every year, the governing board of each public institution of higher education is required to submit a written report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) on the institution's progress in attaining the objectives in the performance accountability plan. This summative statewide report includes highlights from Maryland's public institutions' submissions for the 2023-2024 academic year reporting cycle.

The 2023-2024 Performance Accountability Report summarizes institution's progress toward the three key goals of the 2022 State Plan for Higher Education. In addition, institutions responded to several reporting prompts related to the long-term equity gaps. Their responses reflect institutional strategies and initiatives to 1) increase the completion, 2) improve the success of transfer, 3) eliminate equity gaps, 4) equip graduates with employable skills, and 5) secure federal grants on student success.

In short, the performance accountability metrics reflect that the institutions slowly recovered from the negative impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on enrollment and student success. However, many institutions have not returned to levels of performance seen since before the pandemic and are not on track to meet some of their established benchmarks before the end of their cycle. This year, seven public four-year institutions' Managing for Results (MFR)/PAR metrics cycle concluded (see the detailed analysis in the institutional assessment section). The full institutional reports in the later part of the report provide a more detailed summary of the efforts that the institutions made to meet the goals, objectives, and priorities of the State Plan.

As announced at the recent 2024 Student Success Summit, the Commission has embarked on developing new post-2025 goals as the cornerstone for the forthcoming revisions to the State Plan for Higher Education (due to the General Assembly no later than July 1, 2026). As that work solidifies a vision for higher education for the remainder of this decade, institutions may have an opportunity to reevaluate their performance metrics and related benchmarks to fulfill their commitment to student success and the goals outlined in the forthcoming revised State Plan for Higher Education.

**RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Maryland Higher Education Commission approve the 2024 Performance Accountability Report and ask the Secretary to forward it to the Governor and the General Assembly as required by law.**



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## Maryland Higher Education Commission 2025 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 (meeting modality TBD) are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., with certain exceptions noted below.*

### Scheduled Meeting Dates for 2025

**January 22, 2025**

**February 26, 2025**

**March 26, 2025**

**April 23, 2025**

**May 28, 2025**

**June 25, 2025**

**July 23, 2025**

**August 27, 2025**

**September 17, 2025**  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday)

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

**October 22, 2025**

**November 19, 2025**  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday)

**December 10, 2025**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday)

*Dates, times, and details are subject to change.*

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

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

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

217 East Redwood Street • Suite 2100 • 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](http://www.mhec.maryland.gov)